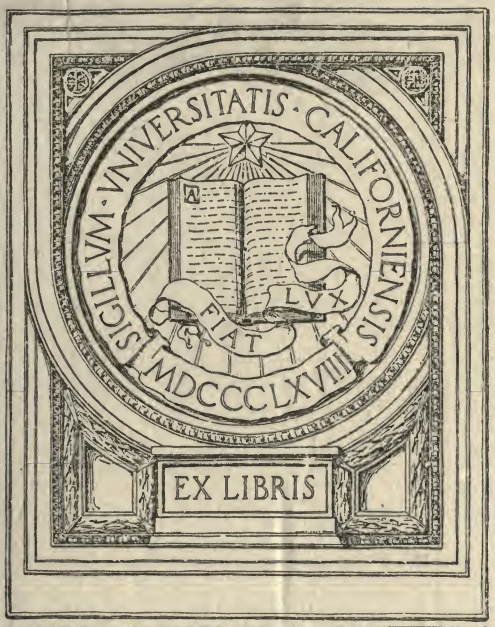
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THE VOLUNTEERS

AND THE

NATIONAL DEFENCE

BY

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PREFACE

THE following essay, along with nine others, was published in 1891, in a volume entitled *The Volunteer Question*, issued under the auspices of the West of Scotland Tactical Society, to whose courtesy, as well as to that of Messrs. T. & A. Constable, of Edinburgh, I am indebted for kind permission to publish it as a separate volume. I trust that its appearance may be opportune at a time when the nation has been awakened to the importance of defence, and when the appointment of a professional soldier as Commander-in-Chief offers a guarantee that the Volunteers will at length receive the attention they deserve. My object in writing was to give a true account of the chief processes of modern war, and to show how the Volunteer Force, without losing its

character as an army of citizens, may be fitted to do its work of defence in the conditions of war as it is in our day.

The text has been carefully revised with a view to bring it up to date in essential matters. The figures showing the cost of the Volunteer Force, taken from the estimates for 1890–91, have not been altered, for they illustrate as well as those of the present year the facts and principles set forth.

Since 1891 there has been no important change in the character, the conditions of service, or the quality of the Volunteer Force, and no such change in the methods of war as affects the account which I then gave. The introduction of smokeless powder, and the universal adoption of the repeating rifle have, broadly speaking, no other effect than more than ever to increase the premium upon good leading, perfect discipline, and thorough practical instruction in musketry. It will, in my opinion, be necessary to arm the Volunteers

with the same weapon as is used by the Army, and, if possible, to communicate to them the same skill in its use. The two changes upon which the whole future of the Volunteer Force depends, are the introduction of a rational system of selection according to fitness among the officers, with special care in the appointment of commanding officers, and the acquisition, at the public expense, of sufficient and accessible spaces for musketry practice, and for manœuvring.

169, OAKLEY STREET, S.W.
Feb. 12, 1896

THE VOLUNTEERS

AND THE

NATIONAL DEFENCE

INTRODUCTION

SCOPE AND METHOD OF THE INQUIRY

"THE power of Great Britain is vulnerable in her vast colonial possessions, in particular in India, but a decisive struggle with a great European Power will not end without an attempt to land an army upon the English coasts."[1]

[1] *Géographie Militaire*, par le Commandant du Génie A. Marga, deuxième partie, tome iii. p. 263; *cp.* for the probable force to be landed, p. 264. The above opinion may be compared with that of a French naval essayist: "L'étincelant cuirasse de l'empire britannique est elle sans défaut? Et nous est il interdit d'espérer sur quelque théâtre d'opérations bien choisi un succès momentané de nos vaisseaux qui permette a notre armée d'intervenir dans la lutte? . . .

To the perception of this truth the Volunteer force owes its existence. It was created for the purpose of defeating, side by side with the regular army and the militia, or, if need be, when these forces are only partially available, any foreign army which may be landed upon our shores. Is the Volunteer force in its present condition

être maître de la Manche pendant quelques jours !"—"La Stratégie Navale," *Revue des Deux Mondes*, xciv. p. 795. The question of the possibility or probability of an invasion is not discussed in this essay, as it is no part of the theme, and would require for its adequate treatment a thorough and lengthy examination into questions of policy, of naval administration and of naval strategy. For the opinions of English authorities on the question, see *Second Report from the Select Committee on Army and Navy Estimates*, 1887, p. 57. Major-Gen. H. Brackenbury, C.B. : "I have not the slightest doubt that if our Channel Fleet were to be temporarily (for a period, I will say, of three weeks) made powerless, to be removed from controlling the Channel for a period of three weeks, a strong maritime power would be able to place, crowding them together on board ships for the short voyage, such a number of men that they might land, or attempt to land, a force of from 100,000 men to 150,000 men upon these shores." The relation between the naval and the military defence of Great Britain has been discussed by Sir Charles Dilke and me in *Imperial Defence* (1892), and by me in *The Command of the Sea* (1894).

equal to this mission, and, if not, by what means short of an entire change in its character can it be adequately prepared for the work—the only work which it can be called upon to perform? These two questions describe in general terms the scope of the present inquiry.

The standard by which all defensive preparations are measured is furnished by the nature of the attack to be resisted, that is, by the probable numbers, composition, and quality of the enemy's forces. An invasion of England can be attempted only by one or more of the neighbouring Continental Great Powers. The numbers of the invading army would depend mainly on the possibilities of sea transport. In 1851 it was estimated that France, maintaining at that time an army of 450,000 men, could land in England, in case the opportunity of crossing the Channel unmolested should offer itself, an army of 150,000 men.[1] Commandant

[1] *De la Défense Nationale en Angleterre*, par le Baron P. E. Maurice. Paris, 1851, pp. 40, 81.

Marga, in the work [1] already quoted, gives 200,000 as a reasonable estimate of the force required. He lays down as a condition of the enterprise that, as only a limited number of troops could be landed, the invader should aim at a surprise, and should choose for his landing a point as near as possible to his objective, *i.e.* to London.[2] These data have an important bearing on the quality of the troops that would be employed, and on the nature of the attack. A force of 200,000 men is less than half of that which is at all times with the colours either in France or in Germany.[3] It could therefore be prepared and moved off without any previous calling out of reserves. In that case it would be in every sense a picked force; its battalions would be smaller[4] and handier

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 264. [2] Marga, *ut supra*, p. 263.

[3] Peace strength of the German army, 491,955; of the French army, 555,330. [1890.]

[4] The battalion on a war footing in France and in Germany is 1,000 strong. In peace it is in Germany 544, in France 550 officers and men. [1890.]

than those usually employed in Continental war, and it could be mobilised without the loss of time involved in the assembling and equipment of numerous reservists. This implies the entire suppression of the four, five, or six days now assigned to the process of mobilisation, for the troops without reservists can be entrained at any time at a few hours' notice. It also involves a further consequence of special interest to our inquiry. In the absence of the movement among the civil population caused by the calling in of the reserves, the whole of the preparations, until the troops march from their barracks to the railway stations, can be kept secret. Even the march to the train, effected by small units in many places at the same time, would excite no immediate attention. A delay of the diplomatic rupture until the troops were actually entrained would therefore give the attacking Power an advance in the preparations which might even be equivalent to the arrival of the invading troops at their ports of embarkation at

the time when in England the order for mobilisation was issued.

These considerations suffice to settle in general terms the indispensable conditions to be fulfilled by the defensive forces. They must be able to be ready promptly, that is, they should be in their places with the shortest possible delay after the order for their mobilisation; when so assembled they must be in every respect ready for action, and their armament and training must qualify them to face the picked troops of a modern Continental army.

This general statement requires to be qualified by an examination of the different functions to be performed by the several portions of the defending force.

It is usually, and probably rightly, assumed that provision must be made for the garrisons of the existing forts, and for the special local defence of a number of harbours and coast towns against raids from the sea. The troops told off for these duties can hardly be counted

as available to resist an invading army. According to the mobilisation scheme announced in 1887,[1] a great portion of the Volunteers, both artillery and infantry, come under this category, while about half the infantry and twenty-one corps of artillery are assigned to the army for resisting invasion.

The dispositions to be adopted for the repulse of an invading force present a strategical problem of which no accepted analysis by a competent hand is before the public. It is generally agreed that the invader would regard London as his objective, but there is perhaps less unanimity with regard to the best way of disposing the forces available for defence. The defensive army might be echeloned like a great system of outposts on a plan analogous to that adopted by the Allies in 1815; or it might be concentrated ready to attack the invader as soon as

[1] See *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution*, xxxi. pp. 424 ff., and *cp.* the article entitled, "The Defence of London," in the *Standard* of August 15, 1889.

the direction of his march or the point of his principal landing should be known; and either of these plans might be concurrent with the detachment of a special force for the immediate protection of London against a sudden attack. The mobilisation scheme appears to be based upon such a combination. Its authors contemplate the assembling in positions near London of the Volunteer infantry and artillery not told off to garrisons or special local services. On the south of London 60,000 men and 150 guns are assigned to a front of 34 miles from Guildford to Halstead, while on the north-east, a front of 24 miles is given to about 30,000 men with 80 guns. The defence of these lines must evidently be based upon a series of prepared positions—either permanent fortifications or field-works—and upon the ready movement of supports and reserves according to the direction of the attack or attacks. The conditions of success in a defence of this kind are, apart from the general command, that the troops should be thoroughly

trained in shooting and in fire discipline, and that they should be able to march punctually in considerable bodies, that is, at the least in brigades. They should also be acquainted with the nature of field-works, and with the tactics of their attack and defence. If the several corps were familiar each with the particular locality in which it would be stationed there would be an obvious further advantage.

The mobilisation scheme, however, has hitherto hardly been taken seriously. At least we may infer, from the fact that no modification has been ordered in the training of the Volunteer infantry to suit it to the conditions of the scheme, that the Commander-in-chief has not definitely adopted this plan of defence. In any case, the scheme would seem, perhaps owing to its being only imperfectly known, to be open to criticism in two respects.

The mobile portion of the defensive army appears to consist of two army corps of regular soldiers, and about one army corps of militia.

This is hardly sufficient if the enemy is able to land five army corps—150,000 men. But an invasion would scarcely be attempted except in circumstances which might render the regular army liable to calls that would remove large portions of it from Great Britain. In that case the two army corps would not be available at home. This probability, and the numerical weakness of the mobile force provided, are perhaps sufficient grounds for urging that the formation of at least one field army corps of Volunteers would be a most desirable supplement to the scheme.

An examination of the other weak point of the scheme will show how this is possible. Its authors assume that for garrison purposes not the whole but only half of any Volunteer corps would be available. This assumption appears to rest on a grave misapprehension as to the nature of the Volunteer service. No Volunteer corps can be called out for actual military service, or, to use the modern term, "mobilised,"

except in case of "actual or apprehended invasion of any part of the United Kingdom.' In the present state of military opinion at home and abroad—in the face, that is, of a universal agreement that a war with a great European Power will not end without an attempt at invasion, and that the attempt will be in the nature of a surprise—it would seem reasonable to interpret this to mean that the Volunteers can be mobilised as soon as war with a great Power is imminent. It has already been seen that an indispensable condition of the defence is that the forces to be used should be ready at once—in other words, that mobilisation and concentration must begin as soon as there is a reasonable probability of war. The construction here put upon the statute is absolutely necessary to the end which Parliament had in view when it was passed,—the defence of the country,—and if there is a doubt about its interpretation the Act should be amended. It is incredible that any Volunteer should be supposed to object to

a change so evidently prescribed by common sense. An explicit declaration upon this point would perhaps contribute more than any other measure to bring home to the public, as well as to the Volunteers themselves, the serious nature of their work and the real value of their services. The mobilisation scheme, however, contemplates mobilising half a corps at a time. "Seeing before me many distinguished Volunteer officers," said General Brackenbury in 1887,[1] "I will ask them whether it is possible that the whole of any one of their Volunteer corps could be maintained in a garrison distant by rail an hour or two hours from the place where the men live. Could they be taken as a body of troops, put into a garrison, and the whole of them kept there during the continuance of a war which might last for many months?" "We consider that that is practically impossible. And the basis upon which our scheme has been worked has been this—that one-half of the Volunteers

[1] *R.U.S.I. Journal*, xxxi. p. 425.

actually living in any seaport to be defended may be considered always available for garrison duty." These sentences are a puzzle to those familiar with the nature of volunteering. The Volunteer is essentially a man who works for his daily bread, and receives his military training in his spare time. Neither the officer, speaking generally, nor the private, can leave his everyday work for soldiering. He drills in the evening or on a half-holiday when his work is done. He goes into camp at holiday-time. If his Volunteer engagements interfere with his business he gives them up, being entitled to retire at fourteen days' notice. But, in case the Volunteer force is called out, his freedom is gone. He becomes a soldier; he must march or be a deserter; he becomes entitled to a soldier's pay, and to all allowances for his family which a soldier can claim. How does General Brackenbury reach the conclusion that half the Volunteers living, say, in Glasgow, are always available for garrison duty? They are all at work, all dependent on their

work, and are scattered in hundreds of different trades and industries and a thousand different workshops. By what power is a commanding officer to assemble half his corps for actual military duty? The Act gives no power to call out half a corps, and the commanding officer cannot take upon himself to say that of two men, each of whom is earning thirty shillings a week, one must come down to a shilling a day, or be a deserter, while the other is to go about his work as usual. The belief universal among the Volunteers is, that except for the great emergency of apprehended invasion none of them can be disturbed, and that in that emergency they must all be called upon alike. Perhaps General Brackenbury thinks that industry would suffer if the whole of the Volunteers in any town were taken from their work. But the calling of half a battalion instead of the whole has no bearing on this. In a large town the disappearance of all the Volunteers would not perceptibly modify the supply of labour. Or, perhaps the "half"

system is conceived of as a relief to employers. But it is no such thing. Private A is a mechanic, and Private B a bookbinder. If A is called out, B cannot do his work for him. But A will assuredly not go unless B has to go also. The calculation that "half the corps" can be called out is surely erroneous. The whole force must be called out at once. If the views here expressed are sound, it follows that the mobilisation scheme has under-estimated the number of Volunteers available, and the actual surplus above the estimate of the scheme would probably suffice for the creation of an army corps.

The question of the terms of service has led to a digression from the immediate question, which is, the specific functions to be performed by the several portions of the defensive forces of the country. But the digression shows that this question cannot at present be categorically answered, and that there is every probability of Volunteer corps finding their place in each of the constituent portions of the defence, in the mobile field force,

in the army for the immediate protection of London, in garrisons, and in the work of special local defence.

The first reform we have to propose is that these doubts should be cleared up. Every Volunteer corps should be officially told off to its place in the scheme of defence, and its training should be regulated solely with a view to preparing officers and men for the war work thus assigned to them.

Pending an official settlement of this first requisite—the introduction of a definite relation between the end and the means—we shall assume that there must be Volunteer field troops, Volunteer garrison troops, and Volunteer troops for the occupation of field works of a stronger character than mere "hasty entrenchments."

In each case the highest standard of training must be adopted, for the enemy will be a picked and well-trained force. Even if it cannot be attained, a high standard will lead further than a low one. But it may be possible to show how,

without passing the bounds of what is thoroughly practicable, a far higher degree of perfection than has yet been realized is quite within reach of the Volunteers.

In the absence of a clear and well-known distribution of *rôles* to the various portions of the Volunteer force, and of a specific and authoritative description of the several functions to be performed by the field army, the London defence army, the local troops, and the garrisons, it is impracticable to examine in detail the fitness of the different classes of Volunteers for the work that must fall to them in war. The method here adopted will be to assume that there must be at least one army corps of the field army, composed—if not entirely, at least in part—of Volunteers, and to ascertain how far the better corps of Volunteer infantry are prepared for war service in this position. For this purpose the principal necessary operations of war will be discussed in the natural order of their occurrence, so that a complete view of the requirements and of the

sufficiency of the present system to meet them may be obtained. The theoretical disadvantages of this procedure are diminished by the fact that about three-fifths of the Volunteers are infantry, and have hitherto been trained exclusively with the view of employment in the field.[1] The modifications in this training which would be required in the case of Volunteers otherwise employed are not so great as might at first sight appear, and can be pointed out incidentally.

The method to be adopted in seeking to approximate more closely to the ideal depends, however, not merely upon the standard set up, but upon the conditions of the Volunteer service, which set limits to the bounds of possible accomplish-

[1] The great variety of local and other conditions makes the Volunteers far from homogeneous. The writer has had opportunities of seeing the work done by a great number of different corps quartered in different parts of the country. His conclusions, however, are based mainly upon the experience of a single battalion, and of the brigade of which it forms part. It may, therefore, be well to say that the battalion and the brigade are by universal admission among the best in the Volunteer force.

ment. It will therefore be necessary to inquire closely into these conditions, and to deduce from them the principles which must guide the training and administration of Volunteers as distinguished from regular soldiers. Upon this basis the attempt will be made to establish the outlines of an improved Volunteer system—the outlines only; for it would be labour thrown away to elaborate too minutely the details of a system until the acceptance of the principles, by which it is determined, appears probable. A brief glance at the financial conditions of the service will, perhaps, be a desirable supplement to the inquiry.

PART I

THE PRESENT CONDITION OF THE VOLUNTEERS TESTED BY THE STANDARD OF FITNESS FOR WAR

I. *Mobilisation*

NO army can be permanently maintained on a war footing. The first stage, therefore, of any military operation is the passage from the peace to the war footing, now commonly called "mobilisation."[1] It comprehends three different processes which are carried on as nearly as possible simultaneously. The various corps of troops[2]

[1] For the process of mobilisation abroad, see *Der Feldzug von* 1866 *in Deutschland Redigirt von der Kriegsgeschichtlichen Abtheilung des Grossen Generalstabes*, p. 16. *Der Deutsch-Französische Krieg*, 1870–1871, pp. 49 ff. Berthaut, *Principes de Stratégie*, pp. 34–37. Blume, *Strategie*, pp. 65–67. Spenser Wilkinson, *The Brain of an Army*, pp. 72-74, and *Citizen Soldiers*, pp. 82–84.

[2] This expression is borrowed from Major Buxton's *Elements of Military Administration*, and is used to save the constant repetition of "battalions, batteries, regiments, and corps."

(including those of the service of transport and supply) are brought up to their exact war strength, both in men and horses. Their equipment is completed, and all those staffs which are not fully manned in peace are organised and told off to their respective functions. In a modern short service army something like half the time required for mobilisation is devoted to calling in the reserves, or trained men not permanently with the colours. In the case of a French or German army for the sudden invasion of England it is probable that no reserves would be called out, and that in this way two or three days would be saved, if, indeed, the whole process of mobilisation, the whole of the delay which it usually involves, were not dispensed with by previous secret preparations. It is, therefore, necessary, if the Volunteers are to be ready in time, that their mobilisation should be effected with the greatest possible rapidity. For this purpose their organisation offers peculiar advantages; they have no reserves to call out, and the men of

each corps live in the immediate neighbourhood of their headquarters. The only thing needful, therefore, is that the arrangements should be fully matured, and that every man and every officer should know exactly what he has to do in order that the process should be completed. This is, however, impossible without a precise and simple code of regulations with which every one has become familiar by practice during peace. No such code exists,[1] and we must, therefore, endeavour to ascertain what should be its main provisions.

The first step is to call out the Volunteers. It should be settled whether upon the mere issue of the Queen's Proclamation, or of a notice in the *Gazette*, it becomes the duty of every commanding officer to mobilise his corps, or whether

[1] The Volunteers Act, 1863, lays down in section 17 the power of the Queen to call out the Volunteer Corps, and in section 18 authorises commanding officers to lay out two guineas per man in providing necessaries, the residue to be paid to the officer, non-commissioned officer, or man himself.

he must wait for specific orders; and, in the same way, whether the individual Volunteer is to obey a general advertisement, or to wait for specific notice calling upon him to join his corps. In the second place, every commanding officer ought to be told the exact field establishment of his corps. There are always a number of men sick or away from home, others must be left at headquarters, so that no battalion can march out with its full peace establishment. The establishments of corps are at present of various types, and this evil would be enormously exaggerated if the process of mobilisation were to produce a further diversity within each of the several types. We will assume that the war establishment has been settled beforehand, and that upon the issue of a proclamation, or upon the receipt of the orders prescribed, the members of a corps have assembled at its headquarters. All the men should be subjected to a medical inspection, those unfit for service being detained at the headquarters. The men who have been passed

by the doctor will then receive the whole of their equipment and ammunition; the regimental transport will be collected, loaded, and horsed, and the corps will then be ready.

The object is to accomplish this work in the minimum number of hours, and economy of time will be effected only by the most careful previous working out of the arrangements. Take, for instance, the simple process of medical examination. If we allow only a minute for the examination of each man, and assume a battalion of 1,200 men with three surgeons, the examination would occupy, without interruption, six hours and forty minutes. This is, evidently, far too long; it can be reduced only by increasing the number of surgeons. Accordingly, the surgeon of every battalion should be authorised, in case of mobilisation, to obtain the temporary assistance of a number of civilian surgeons, and would act himself merely as the superintendent of the large staff thus extemporised. In the same way it would be neces-

sary, in order to save time, to divide the stores of equipment, and temporarily to increase the staff intrusted with their distribution. There is no need to enter further into detail, the instances given will sufficiently illustrate the need of the regulations which should be prepared. Indeed, it is not necessary that the system should be the same for all corps; the essential thing is that each corps should have its system of mobilisation perfectly organised. This result can be ensured only by the periodical practice of the more difficult parts of the operation,[1] and the regular inspection of all the arrangements.

Regulation, however, is not enough. The necessary stores must be ready. Public attention has of late been strongly drawn to the subject of Volunteer equipment: many of the better corps are amply provided, and the special allowance granted in 1890 by the Secretary of State for War will probably suffice to meet all require-

[1] The essential point is probably the mode of issuing the stores of equipment.

ments. Nothing, however, seems to have been done with regard to ammunition, which is, after all, the one indispensable requisite with which commanding officers cannot possibly provide themselves. No arrangements for mobilisation will be of much use unless the whole of the ball ammunition required for each corps is permanently stored at some accessible place in the immediate neighbourhood.

It may be well, in order to guard against misunderstanding, to add that although in the order of operations mobilisation comes first, it really comes last in the order of importance. A corps of men ill-trained and led by incompetent officers will be of no use against the enemy, however promptly and however well equipped.

2. *Railway Transport.*

Mobilisation is the affair of the individual corps of troops. Each corps prepares itself at its own headquarters, and ought not to leave them until it is absolutely ready, in every re-

spect, to meet the enemy. The next thing is to assemble the several corps so as to form an army. The first stage of this concentration is usually effected by railway. The general arrangements for railway transport, culminating in the preparation of time-tables for all the trains, is the business of the staff, and does not concern the Volunteers as such.[1] All that is required from the corps of troops is that each should arrive at the station punctually at the hour named, neither sooner nor later, and should be entrained as quickly as possible without disorder. This operation presents no difficulties whatever, so far as the men are concerned; it is necessary only that the officers should have the men in hand, and should be familiar with the commanding officer's method of entraining.[2]

[1] The Railway Staff Corps is a portion of the staff composed of Volunteer officers.

[2] "Too minute details are only puzzling to the soldier. The instructions should be few and very simple. Order and quiet is what is needed, and, so long as these are maintained, a certain latitude can be granted to the soldier

The entraining of the regimental transport (for one battalion, sixteen waggons and fifty-eight horses)[1] requires more careful management. The transport officer and his assistants should be thoroughly familiar with the operation. The movements of Volunteers by rail are so frequent that any commanding officer can assure by practice the speedy and orderly entrainment of his corps, if he takes care on each occasion to have everything done exactly as he would have it done in war. There is no better test of the discipline of a regiment than the manner in which it enters and leaves a railway train.

3. *The March.*

The railway transport ended, all further movements are effected by marching. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the march, which constitutes the everyday work of an army;

in getting into the train, securing his things, and accommodating himself."—*Military Transport*, by Lieut.-Col. George Furse, p. 129.

[1] *Field Army Establishments*, July 1st, 1888, p. 14.

combat, or at any rate battle, being the rare exception. Yet, of the march under ordinary war conditions the Volunteers have absolutely no experience. The movement of an isolated battalion or brigade presents no difficulties. In war it is of very rare occurrence, yet it is only under these easy and abnormal conditions that any Volunteer corps have practised the march at all. The strongest of the Easter marching columns never amounts to the force of a brigade on a war footing, and the practice afforded is almost exclusively that of advance guards, rear guards, and outposts. But the great difficulty in war is to move large masses from place to place. An army of 150,000 men is hampered, when within striking distance of the enemy, by a series of incompatible conditions. The force must never be so disseminated that it cannot in a few hours be concentrated for battle. The breadth of its front must therefore not exceed about 30 miles. It can move only along good roads, of which the number is limited ; accordingly, a large mass

of troops must be placed on each of the available roads. The whole of the troops must be fed every day, and as it is impracticable to rely entirely upon the provisions found in the district occupied, it is necessary that each body of troops should be followed by a convoy of provisions, which, added to the numerous ammunition and baggage waggons, forms a train as bulky as the column of combatants itself. Thus, over an area represented by a rectangle some 30 miles wide and 40 miles from front to rear,[1] every available road is covered with cavalry, artillery, guns, and waggons in almost interminable procession. It is evident that without the most perfect order movement under such conditions would be impossible.

Though it is desirable to assign a separate road to each division, this will usually be impracticable during the all-important marches which precede a general enagement.[2] It will

[1] Berthaut, *Des Marches et des Combats*, ii. p. 33.

[2] Even less practicable with the English corps of three

usually be necessary to place a whole army corps upon each road. Taking this case as a type, we may examine briefly the conditions of the movement.

An army corps on the march occupies a minimum of no less than 23½ miles of road.[1] The combatant troops alone, without the train, assuming them to be separated merely by the regulation distances, would cover 26,200 yards, or about 15 miles. To this must be added 25 per cent. (say four miles) for opening out, and one mile at least for the distance between the rear of the advance guard and the head of the main body, making a total length for the combatant column of about 20 miles.

The length of an ordinary day's march, that is, the distance from the centre of the old quarters

divisions (of eight battalions each) than with the Continental corps of two divisions (of twelve or more battalions each).

[1] *Field Army Establishments* (Army Orders, July 1st, 1888), Military Admin. and Staff Duties, Tables and Data for the use of Staff College Officers, by Lieut.-Col. Rothwell, 1888, pp. 22, 23.

to the centre of the new quarters, or better, from the initial to the terminal point of the march,[1] is about 15 miles. The first difficulty in the management of the march arises from its duration, the time which elapses between the start of the head of the column and the arrival of the rear. This duration will be ascertained by adding the time required by the column to pass a given point to the time required by the rear of the column to cover the distance from the initial to the terminal point. At three miles an hour, the time required for a column 20 miles long to pass a given point is six hours forty minutes, or, with six halts (one every hour) of ten minutes each, seven hours forty minutes. The time required for the rear of the column to march 15 miles is five hours, or, with four halts

[1] Berthaut, *Des Marches et des Combats*, deuxième partie, p. 2. Lewal, *Tactique de Marche*, p. 100. The initial point of the march is the point on the road followed where the various elements of the column take their places. The terminal point is that at which each element leaves the road for its quarters.

of ten minutes each, five hours and forty minutes. Adding these we get thirteen hours twenty minutes for the duration of the march. If, therefore, the advance guard starts at 5 a.m. from the initial point, the rear of the column will not reach the terminal point until 6.20 p.m., supposing the whole movement to be conducted with perfect order and without any long halt. The head of the column will reach the terminal point at 10.40 a.m., while its rear will not leave the initial point until 12.40 p.m.

From these data it is evident that it is impossible to assemble the army corps before marching it off, and that the only way in which the troops can be saved the unnecessary fatigue of waiting for their turn is to fix a point on the road to be followed somewhat in advance of the district in which the troops are quartered, at which the head of each body of troops (brigade or battalion) must arrive at a time specified in the orders, the time being chosen so that the head of the brigade will reach the point when

the rear of the preceding body has gained the normal distance beyond it. Each corps of troops will be paraded not a minute sooner than is absolutely necessary to enable it to reach this initial point at the hour fixed for it, and will move from its quarters to the initial point by the most direct route. In the same way each corps of troops will leave the line of march for its new quarters on reaching the terminal point selected for the dispersion of the column and situated slightly in rear of the region assigned for the quarters for the night. Any delay on the part of any corps of troops in reaching the initial point will prolong the whole operation, while every minute wasted in waiting on parade to move off will occasion unnecessary fatigue for the men.

These considerations of themselves would suffice to show the absolute necessity of practice in the combined movements of large bodies of troops, but these are only the elementary difficulties.

Every one is familiar with the fact that a body

of troops on the road opens out, that is, occupies, after it has been marching some time, a longer distance than that which it would require if properly halted in the same formation. This prolongation increases with the length of the column, and it appears to be proved that in actual war, even with well-disciplined troops, it frequently equals one-half, and sometimes the whole, of the normal length of the column.[1] In the case of our army corps a loss of distance of 50 per cent. would throw the rear of the column something like an hour and a quarter later than the time given above. A loss of distance equal to the length of the column would cause a delay of about four hours in the arrival of the rear. If it had not been foreseen this would result in hours of waiting in the march formation at the initial point; in any case it would cause immense extra fatigue, and probably interfere with the feeding and the rest of the men at night. How serious such a delay might be on the field of

[1] Lewal, *Tactique de Marche*, pp. 37 ff.

battle need not be pointed out. The careful supervision exercised by the officers during the march, though it will limit, will not prevent the loss of distance. Accordingly, some other means must be found, if not of preventing this evil, at least of reducing its dangerous consequences.

The method consists in breaking up the column into a number of fractions, each not more than about a thousand yards long, and allowing between them a distance equal to the probable average opening out of each fraction. The heads of all these groups march at a uniform pace and halt ten minutes every hour. These halts are simultaneous throughout the column, and at every halt the rear of each group closes up to its normal distance. In this way the elongation of one portion of the column is prevented from spreading to the portion in rear, and the amount of distance lost is regained every hour. The ten minutes' halt of the head of each group allows the rear men of the group, even though they

have lost several hundred yards, to have at least five minutes' rest after closing up.[1]

As some of the troops march in the morning and reach the new quarters early in the day, while others only start at noon to arrive in the evening, it is necessary that the hour of the principal meal should not be the same for all. The leading troops will cook and dine on arriving at the new quarters, the rear troops before leaving the old ones.

It is perhaps not necessary to enter more fully into the details of the march of an army corps. Enough has been said to show that for the satisfactory working of this vast machine more is needed than that the troops should be good walkers. They must be trained to rigid punctuality in packing, and in all preliminaries of a start; they must learn to consider it a deadly

[1] This plan was suggested by General Lewal, *Tactique de Marche*, pp. 43 ff., and has been adopted with slight modifications in the French and Italian regulations. *Le grande Manovre nel* 1879; *Rivista Militare Italiana*, vol. 25, 173 ff.

sin to leave the ranks under any pretence whatever; above all, their officers, from the highest to the lowest, must be practically familiar with the mechanism of the larger bodies, the division, and the army corps, of which the battalion is merely a component part.

But even this is not enough. The superior officers—those who command the divisions and brigades—must be intimately acquainted with the nature, the capacity, and the habits of the troops under their command. A general, for instance, who should allow for only 25 per cent. of opening out in a column accustomed to open out 50 per cent. would soon have it crowded and disorderly, or would wear out the rear of his column with unnecessary waiting. If, on the other hand, he doubled the necessary allowance, he would be needlessly losing valuable hours and minutes. The illustration is chosen because it is a matter which admits of exact calculation. But the need for a commander to thoroughly know his troops is based not so much upon tangible and demon-

strable necessities as upon what are commonly called moral factors. A commander whose officers and men know him and believe in him will obtain performances from them which would be quite impossible from a stranger.

The co-operation of large bodies is at present entirely unknown to the Volunteers. The organisation of brigades gives a framework within which its practice might be prepared, but no satisfactory instruction in the mechanism of marching, and no sufficient test of the proficiency acquired, can be looked for outside of the occasional mobilisation and exercise of divisions.[1]

[1] One very valuable result of the mobilisation of a division and of its assembly in a camp of exercise would be the training of the transport officers and drivers. Only five of the sixteen battalion wagons immediately follow the troops on the march, the remainder belong to the heavy baggage (Clarke, *Staff Duties*, p. 197). Each of these groups (except the tool cart, which keeps with the battalion) falls into its place in a long column of wagons according to the order of march of the battalions, and the management of the various echelons of baggage and train requires, if possible, more forethought, training, and discipline than that of the combatant column itself.

4. *Quarters.*

The army cannot do its work properly unless the men have sufficient rest. Nothing is more difficult to secure. One of the objects of the careful organisation of the march is to ensure that each corps of troops shall be undisturbed in its quarters for as long a time as possible. A good system of march requires to be supplemented by a good system in quarters. There are three essentials: an ample meal, sufficient sleep, and constant readiness to move off—that is to say, that an order to move, expected or unexpected, should at all times find the troops ready to march with the least possible delay.

Troops are put at night either into houses or tents, or they sleep in the open air. Of these methods, the last named is the worst. A succession of bivouacs seriously affects the health and strength of the men, and in Continental armies, which have great experience in this matter, it is well understood that the bivouac

is to be employed only as a last resort. The use of tents involves a great addition to the transport, three wagons being required for each battalion, so that a division with its staff would require for the infantry alone twenty-seven tent-wagons. The best quarters are those obtained by billeting the men in houses. The advantage of this plan, especially in a friendly country, is that the provisions kept by the inhabitants can be made use of, and the inhabitants can be employed to cook the men's dinners. Its disadvantage is the dispersion of the troops. In any campaign it will be found necessary to use all three methods, the choice in each particular case being determined by circumstances.

The annual encampment has familiarised the Volunteers with the method of camping in tents, but it may be doubted whether the conditions of war have not been entirely lost sight of. The very excellence of the arrangements made for the men's comfort during the week's training seems almost to be a source of danger. As a

rule, the battalion on its arrival finds the tents pitched and the camp ready, and during the whole week breakfast, dinner, and tea are provided with a regularity even greater than that of an ordinary household. There is nothing wrong in this, for the main object of the week's camp is to have plenty of time for drill; but undoubtedly a commanding officer would do well for his battalion if he should insist, even at the risk of losing half an hour's drill, on the observance of one or two of the conditions of a campaign. All that is necessary is that from time to time an unexpected order should be given to strike the camp and march off, the camp being replaced at the conclusion of the march on its old site. In this way the men may be taught that the first thing to do after every exercise is to clean their weapons and accoutrements, and, as far as possible, to complete their packing and all other preliminaries of a start. The motto of a regiment in camp should be "Always ready."

With a well-disciplined, or, what is the same thing, a well-officered, battalion the exchange of camp for billets presents no difficulties.[1]

5. *Security and Exploration.*

An army on the march or at rest is comparatively defenceless. It requires to be perpetually guarded against attack and ensured against surprise.

A commander's constant pre-occupation is the enemy, about whom he never ceases to ask himself the questions: Where is he? What is he

[1] The writer has seen a Volunteer battalion of which the camp was unexpectedly flooded placed in billets in the neighbouring village with perfect order and with proper military precautions in something like an hour from the time when the commanding officer's decision was taken.

The formations of bivouac can easily be learned. A battalion, having struck its tents for a march-out, might be halted for an hour in some convenient field where it could bivouac and cook. If this were done only once or twice in two or three years, the knowledge of the forms, which is all that is necessary, would be attained and preserved.

doing? What does he intend? The answers to these questions cannot be evolved from the inner consciousness of the general. There is only one way to obtain them: somebody must go and see.

These two necessities involve two special services, of which the work is never for a moment interrupted, and in the performance of which every portion of the army takes its turn.

At all times, whether marching or at rest, the army is surrounded by a chain of watchers, whose vigilance prevents surprise, and who are supported by a series of groups kept ready to fight, whose resistance will delay any attack by the enemy. These watchers and guards form the service of security. On the march they take the shape of advance guard, flank guard, and rear guard; when the army is halted, they become the system of outposts.

Outside of, and distinct from, this service of security is the service of exploration. Bodies of men of various strength and composition are

pushed forward away from the army, if possible, right up to the enemy or to his outposts, which it is their business never to lose sight of. Their function is not to fight, but simply to watch the enemy, and inform their own commander of his every movement. The Volunteers, since the introduction in 1882 of the examination in tactics, and since the foundation of Tactical Societies in different parts of the country, have given much attention to the study and practice of the work of advance guards and outposts, and for the Metropolitan corps the Easter marches have afforded considerable instruction in these duties. It may be doubted, however, whether their proficiency is such as would stand the test of war. The intention is invariably good, the execution almost always faulty. As a rule, the sound idea prevails that these exercises should be conducted, as far as possible, under service conditions. They are based upon some supposed situation in an imaginary campaign, and conducted in the presence of an enemy, either hypothetical or repre-

sented by other troops. All this is as it should be. But it too often happens that men, and even officers, who are unacquainted with all the mechanism of a picquet and its sentries, or with the practical conduct of a patrol, are called upon to place a picquet or lead a patrol in difficult country and in a situation which they only half comprehend. In such a case mistakes are made without being discovered, and, instead of real instruction, the officers and men are only learning how not to do it. The remedy lies in beginning at the beginning. Officers and men should first learn the meaning, say, of outposts, and the principles from which all the forms are derived. They should then have the opportunity of perfecting themselves on the drill-ground in the practical details, and not until they are well established in the principles, and familiar with the formal mechanism, should they attempt the application of these elements to war conditions.

The teaching of principles is rendered peculiarly difficult by the careless composition of the Field

Exercise, the official text-book, which, on these subjects, is far from lucid, and by no means embodies the best modern military thought.[1] In particular, the Field Exercise does not clearly distinguish between the work of security and that of exploration, and very little attention is given to the art of conducting a patrol, the foundation-stone of all reconnaissance. The practice of reconnaissance is the special function of cavalry, and perhaps for this reason its performance by infantry is neglected. But the British cavalry is numerically weak. It may be assumed as almost certain that on mobilisation no regular cavalry would be available for a Volunteer army corps. The yeomanry, indeed, might be told off for this purpose. There are excellent yeomanry regiments,[2] but no soldier

[1] It is, for instance, amusing to compare the old-fashioned prescription—"Outposts will get under arms an hour before daylight" (p. 161), with the passage in which, fourteen years ago, General Lewal exposed the absurdity of this rule. *Tactique des Renseignements*, vol. ii., p. 294.

[2] For instance, the Middlesex Yeomanry.

who has seen ordinary yeomanry regiments at work would think himself safe in an infantry division which should have to trust to them for protection and exploration. The Volunteers would have to rely, at any rate to a great extent, upon their own resources. Here and there a battalion has provided itself with a troop of mounted infantry, who, if really well trained, would be of great service.[1] There is more promise in the cyclist detachments, but their instruction is likely to be hindered rather than promoted by the prescriptions of the official drill-book. Its author's one pre-occupation seems to have been to invent a series of mechanical evolutions for the drill-ground, every one of which is useless alike on the march, in the camp, and on the battle-field. The one thing needed is to explain to the cyclist officer the nature of the business of reconnaissance, and

[1] The writer has watched several bodies of Volunteer mounted infantry at work without being able to satisfy himself that they could be relied upon for the service of exploration.

its place in the general frame-work of military operations. He may be safely left to arrange as he pleases the order in which his men march, and the mode of turning a bicycle to the right-about.[1] It is indispensable that the rank and file of the infantry should be available for use as patrols, and the work of a patrol ought, therefore, to find its place at an early period in the ordinary training of every man. A good plan would be to introduce patrolling into the instruction of the squad, the patrol to be composed of a non-commissioned officer and three or four men. When halted it would at once become a non-commissioned officer's sentry-post, or, as it used to be called, a post *à la cosaque.* This method would have the advantage of preparing subordinate leaders, for the conduct of a small patrol and the command of a small post are the very best introduction to leadership.

[1] First-rate cyclists declare that the regulation mode of turning to the rightabout was invented expressly to break their machines.

Upon the basis of a sound elementary training it is safe to assert that the Volunteers would soon develop astonishing aptitude in the services of reconnaissance and of security, provided only that the superior officers called upon to superintend them adhered to a rational system in the inspection of these exercises. The inspecting officer too often when prescribing a field day in outpost work asks the Volunteer commanding officer to name the hour at which his outposts will be ready. This is a fatal mistake. A field day is nothing if not a lesson and a test in campaign conditions. The essential thing about outposts is that they should be quickly ready; the inspecting officer should therefore announce his appearance and appear within the shortest reasonable time after the start.

6. *Battle.*

The normal stages of a battle are: the reconnaissance of the enemy, the commander's disposition, the artillery duel, the infantry combat,

and the pursuit or retreat. In the reconnaissance of the enemy which immediately precedes a battle and which, moreover, ought not to cease at any moment during the action itself, the use of infantry patrols, whether cavalry is present or not, is indispensable. This is an additional argument for the careful training of every Volunteer to take his place in a patrol.

No commander in future will attempt to carry a position by a frontal attack alone. Every disposition will involve arrangements for a flank attack (in the defensive for a counter attack). The troops thus employed must be moved into the position from which their flank attack will start without being previously seen by the enemy. Commanding officers should therefore learn to move their battalions in such a manner as to conceal them by a judicious use of the features of the ground from an observer stationed at a given point.[1]

[1] In 1868 the writer was present at the Prussian "Royal" manœuvres in the neighbourhood of Eisenach. The princi-

When the troops are once at the point from which the attack begins, the advance, whether directed against the enemy's front or his flank, will always go in a straight line towards the enemy. No movements to the right or left are practicable under fire. The prime duty, therefore, of the commanders of subordinate units (brigades or battalions) is to choose the points of direction, and so to inform commanders of companies that there can be no possible misunderstanding.

While these preliminaries are being arranged the artillery duel will have begun. On the modern battle-field the indispensable condition of success, whether in attack or defence, is superiority in the artillery duel.[1] The essentials

pal impression produced upon all the non-military spectators was one of astonishment at the manner in which infantry battalions and cavalry regiments which had been seen at one point became suddenly invisible, and soon after reappeared as if by magic in quite a different part of the ground. Close observation showed that this was effected by a choice of route according to the facilities afforded by the ground for concealment.

[1] See Major Keim, *The Present State of Tactical Science*

are to bring into action from the beginning a superior number of guns, to get the range with as little loss of time as possible, to concentrate the fire upon those targets which are, for the time being, the most important, and to ensure the uninterrupted supply of ammunition. The fulfilment of these requirements demands from field artillery a very high state of perfection in every respect. Prince Hohenlohe sums them up in two sentences. He says that the artillery must be on the spot in time, and then it must first of all hit, secondly hit, and thirdly hit. To be on the spot in time implies enormous capacity of marching. Prince Hohenlohe considers that field artillery should be able to march leagues, and even successive days' marches, at a rapid pace.

and Battle Training, Berlin, 1890; translated, *Journal R.U.S.I.* xxxiv., pp. 540 ff. *Exerzir Règlement für die Feldartillerie*, Berlin, 1889, pp. 129 ff. *Règlement sur les Manœuvres des Batteries Attelées* (28 December, 1888), vol. i. Rapport présenté au Ministre de la Guerre. Hohenlohe, *Militärische Briefe*, iii., pp. 222 ff. Berthaut, *Des Marches et des Combats*, part 1, chap. xi.

The German authorities consider this so necessary that they lay down as regards pace, "the one consideration upon which everything depends is that the horses have fulfilled the purpose of their existence when they have brought the guns into position, even though then they fall down dead." The report presented in 1888 to the French Minister of War sums up in the following sentences the question of field artillery :—"The effect of the projectiles at present in use in European armies, and the precision of fire attained, impose upon the artillery the necessity of obtaining from the beginning, and of ensuring during all the periods of the contest, the superiority of its fire over that of the adversary.

"The probable more frequent employment of this arm in masses requires the rapid execution of long marches, a formation for combat susceptible of being accommodated to every kind of ground, and supple and rapid manœuvres permitting the batteries to pass through all the varied difficulties of the battle-field.

"The violence of artillery contests requires a system of supply ensuring at every moment the replacement of the quantity of ammunition, however great, which has been consumed, and makes it necessary to search for measures such as will diminish the vulnerability of batteries without ever restricting the effect of their fire.

"The requirements just defined characterise the duties imposed upon artillery, and trace at the same time the rules of its employment, which may be summed up in these words: simplicity of details, suppleness of manœuvre, rapidity of execution, guaranteed certainty of the supply of ammunition."

These principles, it may be hoped, are now familiar to Volunteer officers. The point of which they are most likely to lose sight is the great difficulty of finding the range on the battle-field, and the great length of time which is spent, sometimes without any success, over this operation.

The Volunteer force is without field artillery,

and it is precisely for that reason that stress is here laid upon the nature and working of the arm, for the recent issue of a large number of "guns of position" to Volunteer artillery corps appears to have led to some confusion. The batteries thus formed have more than once been spoken of as though they were field batteries, that is, as though they might be assigned to a field army corps. A moment's consideration of the requirements above explained will show that they cannot possibly be fulfilled by batteries of 20-pounders or 40-pounders, horsed by scratch teams, and managed by imperfectly-trained drivers. The batteries of position might well find their place in the force for London defence, but even there it would be dangerous to count upon being able to move them except at the slowest pace from point to point.

It is certain that the regular army has no artillery to spare for a Volunteer army corps. If, therefore, an efficient Volunteer army corps is ever to be formed, some new plan of providing

field batteries must be devised. Colonel Birley's proposals [1] seem to suggest a practicable method. Colonel Birley considers that a Volunteer artillery corps might be converted into field artillery proper by the addition of a riding school with stables, a riding master, and a small number of drivers permanently attached from the Royal Artillery. The total cost of each battery would be about £2,000 per annum, which compares favourably with the cost of a field battery of Royal Artillery, £13,000 a year.[2]

As soon as the officer commanding the artillery has reported that he has the better of the artillery of the defence, the commanding general will give the signal for the advance of the infantry, which, by this time, will have completed its preliminary movements. This part of the battle requires our special attention, for an attack

[1] *Field Artillery for Home Service*, by R. K. Birley, Major and Hon. Lieut.-Colonel the Manchester Artillery. Manchester: J. E. Cornish, 1889.

[2] Lieut.-General Brackenbury, in *Journal of Royal United Service Institution*, vol. xxxi. p. 427.

in the field has hitherto been the one goal at which the training of the Volunteer infantry—three-fifths of the whole Volunteer force—has been aimed.

The weapon of infantry, the only weapon upon which the infantry can rely, is the bullet. The bayonet has no chance against the bullet, and no sane man contemplates the employment of the bayonet until the bullet has done its work. It is necessary to repeat and to emphasise this elementary truth, because, as will be seen, it is frequently forgotten, even by the best Volunteers. An infantry attack falls naturally into three stages or phases. First of all, the troops advance towards the enemy until they are near enough to fire with effect; that is, until they can be sure that a reasonable proportion of their bullets will hit. Once within this distance, their business is to pour upon the enemy so many bullets that his resolution to hold his ground at all costs is broken down, and that his men feel that at the particular point where they are there is no hope

of success. When this has been effected, but not before, the attacking infantry will push rapidly forward into the position hitherto held by the enemy. In the improbable case that the enemy should await their coming, they will rush upon him with the bayonet and drive him out by sheer force. The retreating enemy will be pursued, not with the bayonet, but with the bullet.

The enemy, however, defends himself with the same weapon, the bullet, which experience proves to be so deadly that no body of men in close order can be exposed to it without the risk of destruction.

The normal order of attack follows with logical necessity from these conditions. It is, in its general outlines, essentially the same in all modern armies. The actual fighting, that is the firing, the destruction of the enemy with bullets, is intrusted to a line of skirmishers divided by short intervals into handy groups. From the moment that effective rifle-range is reached, this firing or fighting line is kept at its maximum

density—that is, there is a firer wherever there is room for him; and, as one firer cannot be placed behind another, this means that there is a combatant for every available yard of front.

The troops not in the firing line are not fighting: they are merely reservoirs of men which can be drawn upon to strengthen the firing line to fill up gaps which may occur, or to prolong it should opportunity offer.

For purposes of management, the firing line is subdivided into lengths of about 100 yards, each of which is superintended by an officer, who has assigned to him his own special reservoir of fresh men or "support." His object will be to keep this reservoir near enough to him to be sure of obtaining any needed reinforcements in good time, and also to keep it out of harm's way—out of the way of the enemy's bullets—until he thus draws upon it. He will therefore not wish his support to be more than 200 yards behind his firing line, for at that distance the men will require two minutes before they can be made use

of, while they will never, until actually made use of, be brought as near as 100 yards, the distance at which they would be exposed to the bullets aimed at the firing line.[1]

A smaller number of larger reservoirs of men at the disposal of the managers of longer lengths of front is kept at a further distance in rear of the firing line; and still further in rear, in order the better to preserve them from the destructive effects of the battle in front, as well as to keep open the possibility of moving them to any point of the front line, are kept the still larger reservoirs at the disposal of the higher commanders.

The normal order of attack, here described in the most general terms, is laid down in more or less detail in the field exercise of every modern army. But success does not depend upon the normal order of attack, which is merely the in-

[1] A body of men firing at another body drops its bullets over an area measuring in the direction of the line of fire about 300 yards, the target aimed at being in the centre of the area. The number of bullets per yard decreases with the distance in front of or behind the target.

dispensable A B C, the "beggarly elements" which are instilled into every soldier; for, paradoxical as it may seem, a battle is not really fought in this normal order, which exists merely as a basis for training the troops in the several functions of the fighting line, the supports, and the reserves. A modern battle is a series of local combats: at one point the corner of a wood is attacked, near to it a separate struggle is carried on for the possession of a village, beyond that the contest is for the possession of a bare knoll overlooking a long open slope, while further away again a farm with its outbuildings has been converted into a temporary fortress offering a stubborn resistance alike to shell, to bullets, and to the bayonet. Each of these local battles requires its generalship. The open slope is swept from the knoll with such deadly fire that it cannot be ascended; all that can be done here is so to occupy the defenders that they cannot move to the assistance of their friends in the village or in the farm. The farm, too, could not be carried in

front, except at a quite disproportionate cost of life. The commander at this part of the ground attempts to attack it in flank, moving round under cover for this purpose all the men that he can spare from the necessary demonstration in front. To assist him, the commander of the artillery concentrates upon the farm a fire of a hundred guns stationed in groups of batteries at different points along the line of attack.

The normal order to which the troops are accustomed is merely a storehouse of forms from which the several commanders can choose those best suited for their immediate purpose. The commander of every hundred men is in his own sphere a general. The object at which he must aim—the capture of the wood, the village, the knoll, or the farm—is given him by superior order; his function is judiciously to employ to attain this end the means at his disposal. The commander of a battalion is ordered to attack the wood. First of all, he makes up his mind how to set about it. He selects as the weakest

spot a salient point; decides to employ two companies to cover with fire each of the flanks of the salient; with a third body of two companies he will endeavour to penetrate at the angle pushed out towards him; two more companies he will keep in hand as a guard against any unexpected move of the enemy. These resolutions taken, he explains his plan to the commanders of these four bodies. The four companies told off against the flanks are pushed forward at once; as soon as they are within effective range, the two companies directed against the salient are also sent on. The commander has now fired his bolt; he can do no more than watch, and prepare with his reserve to meet accident or disaster, to give assistance where it may be required in his front, and, in case of success, to strengthen the captured position against any attempt to retake it. The orders issued, and the leading double companies started, the conduct of each of them is in the hands of its own commander, whose proceeding is a repetition on a smaller scale

of that of the battalion commander. The firing line itself is handled in small groups, each of which is worked by a leader, treating his eight or ten men as a sort of battery or machine-gun delivering its eight or ten bullets on the particular spot where he thinks they will do most harm, and moving them from point to point of the ground, according as it offers a site from which the firing of his battery will tell. The right double company, directed against the outer flank of the salient, has advanced to about 500 yards from the edge of the wood. Five sections are in the firing line; four of them, lying on the top of a gentle rise, are pouring in their volleys at the points where the flashes among the trees reveal the presence of defenders. The fifth is not firing; there is no room for more men on the rising ground, and the leader of this section finds no place from which he can see more than the tops of the trees. Suddenly the firing groups are enfiladed by a volley from a different portion of the wood in the prolongation of their line to

the right. Immediately the officer commanding the three sections still unused deploys them, extended, to his right, forming a line facing the new assailants, against whom all his rifles are quickly brought into play. The battalion commander perceives this new development, and moves his reserve to his right front to be ready to help at this critical point. But the fire from the flank ceases; the five sections, reinforced from the battalion reserve, push forward another hundred yards; the flashes in the wood become intermittent; the enemy's bullets no longer tell—they pass harmlessly over the heads of the firing line. The captains push on, the one remaining company of the battalion reserve following close behind. The leader of the left section is in advance of the rest—there is no fire in his front. The commanding officer sees this section rise and rush to the front with fixed bayonets; immediately he sounds the charge, and without an instant's delay the whole body, just as they are—the firing line in irregular groups, the reserves

in an irregular broken line at rank entire—rush right up to and into the wood, which they find abandoned by all but the wounded.[1] The movement has been seen by the other double-company commanders, whose troops quickly follow into the position. Here, however, everything is chaos: the whole battalion seems like a wild excited mob. The commanding officer sounds the assemble, pushing on with his company of reserve to a clearing, where he places the men in position, with orders to hold the edge of the clearing at any cost.

This imaginary sketch has been drawn to illustrate the view that success in battle depends mainly upon the commanders, and that by commanders are meant the officers and leaders of every grade, from the general down to the section leader. This is no mere private opinion: it is the conclusion to which twenty years of

[1] For further account of this view of the charge, cp. the author's *Suggestions for a New Field Exercise for the Volunteer Infantry*, pp. 32, 33. Manchester, 1886: Cornish.

study, of experiment, and of practice have brought all the armies of the Continent. During the first few years which followed the Franco-German war, the general pre-occupation was to study the effects of rifle fire, and to deduce from them such a normal order of attack as should enable the ground swept by the enemy's bullets to be passed over with the minimum of loss.[1] This stage of development was followed by a reaction. It was felt that a normal order, however ideal, would be of no avail without judicious application, and that, as the application must vary at every different point of the battle-field, it could not be undertaken by the generals, but must be entrusted to every officer in his own sphere.[2] The necessity for the exercise by

[1] The conclusions reached at this stage in the history of tactics have never been better set forth than in the "Rapport du Ministre de la Guerre" prefixed to the French *Règlement du* 12 *Juin* 1875 *sur les Manœuvres de l'Infanterie.*

[2] The best brief account of this development in Continental views of infantry combat will be found in the Introduction to the classical lecture, *Ueber das Infanteriegefecht*,

each commander of trained judgment is nowhere more clearly brought out than in the German Drill Book issued two years ago. We read here, for instance: "The normal formation must be abandoned without hesitation wherever the eventualities of the combat require"; and again: "Exercises will approximate to the reality of war in proportion to the correctness with which the forms are chosen with a view in every case to the object arising out of the supposed situation. In practice, as in reality, the forms must be so chosen as to yield the greatest effect from our own weapons and to diminish that of the enemy's. If these two requirements, of which the former is always the essential, are met, the exercise fulfils the conditions of war." And again: "Every combat must be carried out according to the object in view, the force and

by Colonel (now General) von Schlichting. Berlin, 1879. See especially pp. 5 and 6, where we read: "Das Infanteriegefecht kann nur noch bis in die kleinsten Einheiten hinab disponirt, darf nicht uniformirt werden."

time available, and the nature of the ground. The first of these considerations is the most decisive." [1]

The question how far the Volunteer infantry approach the standard here set up for their training can best be answered in the concrete. We cannot do better than quote an account taken from a local newspaper of the most recent inspection of a well-known Volunteer battalion which is admittedly one of the best in the country [2]:—

"The sham fight consisted of an attack by eight companies over the open ground at the south end of the park, and was well seen by the spectators. Three or four companies were placed in the wood at the north end of this open space to represent the enemy. The remainder of the battalion was moved to the south end, about 900 yards from the position, which

[1] *Exerzir Reglement für die Infanterie*, 1889, p. 90.

[2] The name of the battalion and of the newspaper are suppressed. The inspection was that of 1890.

they proceeded to attack. The eight companies were told off—four to form firing line, supports, and reserves, two for the second line, and two for the third line. A ninth company was moved to the wood on the west side of the open ground, and from here fired obliquely on the defenders. The movement was carried out according to the method laid down in the *Field Exercise* of 1889, and conformed very fairly with the rules there given. The men were evidently well trained, and were, for volunteers, fairly in hand. Here and there the men in the firing line were a little crowded—owing, no doubt, to the want of a sufficiently clear instruction about the direction; and throughout the movement the distances between the several successive groups were too short. With the representation of a charge by the second line the movement and the day's work ended. The inspection showed that the corps has lost none of its old excellence, the average training of the men being up to the present high-water mark of volunteering.

* * * * *

"The test of fitness for war is not the execution of formal movements, which is a preliminary, but their application. This can be illustrated from Saturday's work. If the 'attack' had been a drill, it would have been carried out on a parade-ground, without blank cartridges, as a test of form. In that case great accuracy would have been required. The neglect of distances and the crowding in the firing line would have been indications that the training was imperfect; in other words, that the companies had not had enough exercise by themselves to be fit to work together as a battalion. But the choice of varied ground, the use of blank cartridge, and the detachment of a strong enemy, mark the practice as a manœuvre, as something distinct from drill. The object is to accustom all ranks as nearly as may be to the actual conditions of battle. The supposition was that an isolated battalion of eight or nine companies was to attack the three companies in the wood. It would also be as-

sumed, though this was not mentioned, that the attackers had the assistance of artillery, which would have prepared for their advance. Upon these suppositions the attack, as it was carried out, would have resulted in the destruction of the battalion as a fighting force. The ground for 700 yards in front of the position is without cover, while the defenders had the best possible cover. Under these conditions a frontal attack is almost hopeless, however well conducted, and its chance is not mended by detaching a handful of men to a point obliquely in front of the enemy. But a frontal attack might be attempted, if combined with a flank attack, provided the attacker used a largely superior force. The attacker on Saturday had two companies to fire at the defender's three. After reinforcing, he had four companies (minus the casualties) actually firing. The whole affair lasted only a few minutes, so that the attackers hardly fired at all. Thus, the men were taught that they can advance across open ground against a well-posted enemy,

and, without firing more bullets than are fired against them, can in a few minutes march right up to the position and charge! Yet this is twenty years after the disasters of the Prussian Guard at St. Privat, and of the 38th Brigade at Mars la Tour, which have written in letters of blood in every Continental drill-book that no infantry position can be approached until its defenders have been crushed under a hail of bullets."

If these criticisms are accepted as sound, and the description to which they apply as a fair account of an average Volunteer performance, the inference may safely be drawn that the Volunteers have much to learn before they will be ready for the battle-field, on which they would meet the French or German magazine rifle. Before leaving the subject of battle, it is desirable to examine more closely one or two points of which the special importance has already been hinted or implied. The foundation-stone of every order of attack, or rather of fighting order, as

distinguished from parade order, is the management of very small bodies—that is, of sections and groups. The ultimate unit is the group in the hands of its leader. The eight, ten, or twelve men should be accustomed to march straight forward without interruption, over every different kind of ground, extending or closing as may be requisite, but always keeping in the direction given. They should learn to lie down, to rise up, and to change front at their leader's word. Above all, they should learn to regard themselves, taken together, as a sort of shooting machine of which the group leader turns the handle. The leader should have learned the first elements of command, namely, that he ought not to give an order without clearly understanding the object to be attained by it, and that, an order once given, its unhesitating fulfilment must be secured. Unless the groups and group leaders are properly taught, a firing line and its supports very soon become little better than a mob, and lack the force and cohesion without

which their position on the battle-field would be hopeless. Accordingly, the training of groups and of group leaders for skirmishing, or, in modern parlance, for the firing line, must be reckoned a fundamental part of the elementary teaching, and should be ranged side by side with the instruction of the patrol and of the non-commissioned officer's post. The group in its turn has its place in the section, and when he has learned his work in the group and in the section, the individual soldier's formal training, so far as fighting manœuvres are concerned, is complete.

The change in the functions of the battalion commander which has resulted from modern conditions inevitably involves a change in the organisation of the battalion. As soon as it is admitted that the commander must be content with arranging his attack, and starting the several bodies on their various missions, it becomes evident that the number of these bodies must be small, and that each of them must be so composed as to contain within itself all the elements

needed to carry out an action within the limited area assigned to it. The battalion of eight or twelve companies does not fulfil these conditions. The company is too small to be intrusted alone with a separate objective, and the eight units are too many for a single commander. At the same time it is universally felt that the small English company is admirably suited for purposes of administration and instruction as well as for control in the field. The management of the battalion in the field can be simplified and strengthened without touching the company system; it is only necessary to work by double companies, or, in a twelve battalion regiment, by treble companies. The two or three companies would form a permanent unit always under the command of the same major or captain, who would manipulate his four half-companies or his three companies much in the same way as the battalion is handled by its commander. This question has too often been discussed as though it were one of large or small companies. Small

companies certainly are better administered and better handled than large ones, but the size of the company is not really the point involved. The question is, whether three bodies of seventy or eighty men each, each of them led by an officer, will produce a more useful result when acting independently or when subject in common to the direction of a commander.[1]

Steadiness in the actual fighting—that is, in the firing line—depends upon the thorough instruction of groups. The intelligent direction of the battalion requires that it should be reasonably subdivided, but the most perfect control and the wisest direction will be thrown away unless the men can use their weapons: the men must be good shots. This is the essence of the whole matter. Unless the captains can be sure of dropping their hail-showers of bullets upon the spots they select, the whole training and the

[1] The writer's own opinion is in favour of a Volunteer battalion with an establishment of 1,200, and an organisation of twelve companies in four larger units of three companies each.

whole Volunteer force is mere pomp and vanity, a delusion and a snare, both to itself and to the nation that maintains it. Yet, nothing is more evident than that the captains who can guarantee this result are few and far between. Twelve years ago, the writer, analysing official returns, pointed out that of every hundred Volunteers only seventy-six could be trusted with any probability to hit a target the size of two men standing abreast at a distance of 300 yards. None were expected to do better than this at this range, and of the seventy-six who could do it only twenty-two could hit with three shots out of four a target 500 or 600 yards distant and representing a group of four men standing side by side.[1]

Since 1882, the date of the returns upon which the above analysis is based, there has been some improvement. At that time the regulations required no more, at 200 and 300 yards, than that each of the twenty shots should strike somewhere on a target 6 feet by 4. At present fifteen shots

[1] *Citizen Soldiers*, p. 23.

out of twenty-one must be placed upon a target 4 feet square. The difficulty is, however, reduced by the fact that all the twenty-one rounds are now fired at 200 yards. The improvement, such as there is, lies in the greater number of men who fulfil the conditions. We are not, for the present, concerned with the method which should be pursued, but only with the question of the kind of result which it is indispensable to attain to qualify the Volunteers for the battle-field. Upon this point the doctrine still holds good that "under ordinary conditions and in pitched battles the decision is brought about not by the refinements of shooting, but by the firing of great numbers at those ranges where errors in judging distance are immaterial."[1] This principle, however, must now be stated with two qualifications: first, that decisive results will no doubt be occasionally obtained, even at long ranges,[2] under

[1] Count Moltke, quoted in *Citizen Soldiers*, p. 24.

[2] Short ranges, 650 yards; medium ranges, 1,100 yards; long ranges, over 1,100 yards. See German *Schiessvorschrift für die Infanterie*, 1889, p. 95.

favourable circumstances by concentrating upon a given point the fire of a number of bodies. And secondly, that the "ranges where errors in judging distance are immaterial" have considerably increased in length. The new German rifle, fired with the sight for 500 metres (550 yards) carries its bullet to a distance of 550 metres (600 yards) without its ever rising above 5 feet from the ground. This fact, and the universal adoption of 650 yards as the limit of short distances, shows the interpretation which must now be placed upon the words used by Count Moltke in 1865. It is evident, therefore, that whatever slight improvement there has been in Volunteer shooting since 1882 has not kept pace with the much greater improvement in the construction of firearms.[1] The German soldier is taught that if he knows how to use his rifle he should expect every shot to tell—

[1] It may be said that the Volunteer shoots, not with the new German rifle, but with the Martini-Henry; but short ranges for the Martini-Henry, defined upon the principle already explained, extend to 450 yards.

Up to 270 yards against any target;

Up to 380 yards against a single man kneeling;

Up to 540 yards against a file kneeling;

Up to 650 yards against a file standing.[1]

This is the ideal—we do not say the attainable ideal—which should be ever present to the Volunteer officer's mind.

The bayonet has no chance against the bullet; it can be employed only after the bullet has done its work. For this reason it is probably waste of time for Volunteers to practise the bayonet exercise so long as their shooting is deficient. The bayonet exercise furnishes excellent physical training, but it may be doubted whether practice in points and parries produces any appreciable skill in the use of the weapon in fencing. To be a skilful fencer, even with a much lighter weapon, requires most assiduous practice, and the minimum control over the bayonet which is acquired by the Volunteer is no sufficient return for the time devoted to it.

[1] *Schiessvorschrift*, p. 91.

The physical benefits may just as well be acquired from the practice of what used to be called "position drill."

A feature of every modern battle-field which has not yet been touched upon is the employment of field works. With field works in their simplest form—that is, the shelter trench or the rifle pit—every defensive position will in future be covered, and, even in the attack, it is certain that the spade will frequently be used. In many Volunteer battalions the construction of shelter trenches has been practised. In this matter nothing more is needed than that the men should have a rough idea of the nature of the work; from the officer more should be required. Every captain should know, not merely how a shelter trench is made, but how to choose the most favourable site for the purpose at any portion of a position in which he may find himself.

In the case of battalions told off for the London Defence Force more thorough instruction

in this branch would be needed. Officers and men should be accustomed to the construction and the defence of field works properly so called.[1]

The military reader will no doubt have been surprised at the absence of cavalry from our imaginary battle-field. The cavalry arm is not represented in the Volunteer force, nor is it probable that it can be. The difficulties of transporting cavalry by sea make it likely that cavalry will form a proportionately small part of any invading force. In any case the enclosed nature of the country in almost every part of England would render it impracticable to employ in battle any of those large masses of cavalry which make such a striking figure in foreign manœuvres. It is desirable, however, that the

[1] Hardly any English work on Tactics deserves to be more urgently recommended to the study of Volunteer officers of all arms than the Elementary Treatise on Field Works published in 1888 by Major-General (then Colonel) C. B. Brackenbury, whose lamented death deprived the Volunteers of one of their truest friends and most valued instructors.

Volunteer Infantry should know how to act in the face of a cavalry charge, and should acquire the confidence necessary to enable them to meet it with success. There is only one way by which this end can be attained. Bodies of regular cavalry should frequently be attached to Volunteer brigades or divisions for the purpose of taking part in their manœuvres. For similar reasons it is most desirable that until Volunteers are provided with field artillery of their own a proper proportion of Royal Artillery should accompany them on all occasions when the manœuvres of large bodies are practised. Nothing is more essential for officers and men than that they should be accustomed to the presence and to the modes of action of the other arms.

PART II

OUTLINES OF A PROGRESSIVE METHOD DEDUCED FROM THE STANDARD AIMED AT AND FROM THE CONDITIONS IMPOSED

I. *The Actual Conditions of Volunteer Service*

THE standard is one thing, the practical possibilities another. The goal to be aimed at by the Volunteers is that they should be able, each corps in the place and manner assigned to it, to confront with reasonable hopes of success the best troops of the Continent. The nature of the requirements involved by the recognition of this primary aim has been analysed in the preceding chapters. But the extent to which the ideal thus set up can be actually approached depends upon the opportunities available for training—in other words, upon the conditions of the Volunteer service.

The Volunteer enlists of his own free will, and is entitled at any time, except when his corps has been called out for actual military service, to resign at fourteen days' notice. He is unpaid, he is not subject to military law.[1] The only penalty[2] which can be inflicted on him is dismissal. The Volunteer always remains a citizen; if he misbehaves, he merely ceases to be a Volunteer. This is perhaps the principal distinction between the Volunteers and all other military bodies.[3] From these fundamental conditions—the absence of constraint to remain in the service, the unpaid nature of the work, and the non-existence of the means usually relied upon to maintain

[1] When associated with regular troops, Volunteers are subject to the Army Act, but no Volunteer can be brought into such association except with his own consent.

[2] The duty of repaying money owing for equipment or for capitation grant not earned is a mere civil obligation, and the fines permitted, but seldom exacted, are customary also in many civil associations.

[3] Tacitus, *Annales*, I, 42: "Divus Iulius seditionem exercitus verbo uno compescuit, Quirites vocando qui sacramentum eius detrectabant."

the discipline of an army—flow the characteristic features of the Volunteer training. The whole of the instruction must be given in the time which the men can conveniently spare from their daily work. This time is not always the same for all, so that it is impossible, as a rule, to prescribe fixed hours of attendance for a whole corps, and to insist on every member being present. Every member must attend the annual inspection, or give beforehand a sufficient reason for his absence. But, apart from the inspection, attendance is secured, not by compulsion, but by the method of averages; for each company or battalion drills and parades are held to about double the number required from each man. Each man makes up the number required from him by attending those which best suit his own convenience. A commanding officer has no power to order the attendance of his whole corps on any occasion except the inspection.

It is probable that none of these conditions could be altered without bringing about an entire

change in the nature of the service.[1] The practice of contracting an engagement with recruits, by which they bind themselves for a stated period, say of three years, has not been proved necessary, for it is unknown in many of the strongest and most efficient corps. It is doubtful whether these engagements are legally binding, and the better practice would be not to allow them. Proposals for paying the Volunteers have not been seriously made, and no proposal to make attendance compulsory at specific drills will be made except by professional soldiers, who too often do not realize the chief characteristic of the service—that the men work for a living. The suggestion has further been made, and has received the support of Volun-

[1] There is reason to believe that a very considerable number of Volunteer officers agree with the view of the present writer that no fundamental change in the conditions of the service ought to be attempted until it has been proved by experience that a reasonable degree of efficiency cannot possibly be obtained without such a thorough change. To alter the fundamental conditions of the service is not to reform it, but to abolish it and substitute a new organization in its place.

teer officers of undoubted attainments, that the conditions of discipline should be assimilated to those of the line. The idea originated, no doubt, in the permission accorded to Volunteer officers to present themselves for examination in Military Law. The British army has two military codes, and two modes of procedure for their enforcement, which need to be the more carefully distinguished because the difference is not evident at first sight. There are a number of rules, and an elaborate judicial procedure, for the maintenance of discipline during peace. On active service a summary procedure is employed to enforce a less intricate code. No purpose would be served by instructing Volunteers in the ordinary peace procedure, which is mainly occupied with matters that do not concern them. The active service code can be applied only after the Volunteers have been called out for actual military service.

It would, no doubt, be an advantage to familiarise the Volunteers during peace with the rules to which they would be subject in war. This end

could easily be attained without any change in the law or in the regulations. The commanding officer of a corps has power to discharge a Volunteer either for disobedience, for neglect of duty, or misconduct, or for other sufficient cause, the commanding officer being the judge of the existence and of the sufficiency of such causes. This power is probably amply sufficient for all purposes. But there is nothing to prevent a commanding officer from announcing, by a standing order, the precise nature of the more serious military offences, and thus instructing the members of his corps in all that it is essential for them to know of military law.[1]

[1] Such an order might run as follows: "The following military offences are punishable on active service with death or penal servitude:—

A. Offences in relation to the enemy—
Cowardice and misbehaviour committed by abandoning a post or casting away arms.
Assisting an enemy by correspondence, by harbouring him, or by aiding a prisoner, or any act which imperils the success of the force.

B. Disobedience, including mutiny, desertion, violence

We dismiss then as unnecessary all idea of tampering with the principal conditions under which the Volunteers at present serve. They should retain their civil status and their right to resign; and the fact that their training is received in spare time should be fully recognised by refraining from any attempt to compel specific attendances admitting of no choice between different days and hours.

Improvement may be obtained, and must be sought for, first, by increasing, as far as may be practicable, the time devoted by each man to

> or threatening language to or disobedience to the lawful commands of a superior officer.
>
> Leaving a guard or post or the ranks without orders; sleeping or being drunk on sentry; forcing a safeguard or sentry or striking a sentry; spreading a false alarm or betraying the watch-word, parole, or countersign; plundering or using violence to inhabitants.
>
> For any of the offences under *B*, the commanding officer will at all times inflict the punishment of dismissal."
>
> Such an order in no way limits the commanding officer's power, or restricts the punishment of dismissal to the offences named.

his instruction, that is, by an increase of the average number of attendances; secondly, by bringing the rifle-range and the manœuvring ground as near as possible to the Volunteers' home; thirdly, by an improved method of instruction; and last, but not least, by the higher moral and intellectual training of the Volunteer officer, and by the full recognition of his services.

2. *Attendances, Ranges, and Manœuvring Grounds.*

The attendances required by regulation from a Volunteer are: During his first two years not less than 60; during each of the third and fourth years not less than 9; during each subsequent year not less than 7. The 60 attendances during the recruit stage admit of a very considerable degree of thoroughness being attained in the many subjects of instruction; and it is well known that the recruits on being posted to a company are usually its smartest

members. Of the remaining members it is equally notorious that, as a rule, those who comply only with the requirements for efficiency are hardly a source of strength; they are the weak members, whose deficiencies must be hidden. The average attendance of men beyond the recruit stage exceeds the Government requirements. The attendances of men in camp are, for those present, a fixed quantity. Apart from camp the average attendance per man in a town battalion 1,200 strong was, in 1889, 14. It would appear that the regular practice of spending a week in camp has had the effect of diminishing the average number of attendances at the home head-quarters. In the battalion just referred to the home attendances during the first two years in which the battalion was encamped averaged 17 per man, and in 1883 the general average attendance of Volunteers was estimated at 20 per man per annum.[1]

It may be doubted whether it is desirable

[1] *Citizen Soldiers*, p. 37.

that attendance in camp should count towards "efficiency." The week under canvas is usually found so attractive by the men that there seems no need of any extrinsic inducement for them to take part in it, while probably the majority of officers would wish to bring the general average of attendance at the home head-quarters to a higher level than is at present attained. The experience of the change made by the increase of the minimum number of recruit drills five or six years ago seems to show that an increased demand upon the men's time is not followed by any permanent diminution of numbers. These considerations perhaps justify the proposal to raise the minimum number of attendances required by regulation for efficiency from the trained Volunteer from 9 (or 7) to 15 in each year after the recruit stage, with the further condition that attendances in camp should not reckon towards this number.

A great advantage is secured when all the men of a company can be drilled together, but

this is a condition which, as we have already shown is not always practically attainable in a Volunteer corps. An approximation can be obtained by reducing the margin between the number of drills held for a given company and the number which each man is required to complete for efficiency. The margin must always exist, and commanding officers can ascertain only by experience what allowance must be made in this respect. Probably, for a necessary minimum of 15 attendances, 25 drills would be held, giving a possible attendance of 25.[1]

Very many of the strongest and best corps—those whose head-quarters are in the large towns—have at present to contend with two serious material difficulties. The rifle-range, if the corps possesses a suitable range at all, is frequently so far from the head-quarters that all practice in

[1] The author proposed in *Citizen Soldiers* (p. 37) a minimum of 20 attendances in each year, of which 14 were to be company and 6 battalion drills. Undoubtedly the highest practicable minimum should be fixed, and the limit can only be ascertained by trying the experiment.

shooting involves a great loss of time, and sometimes a not inconsiderable expense. At no point in the Volunteer system would the judicious expenditure of a moderate sum of money be so well repaid in results as here. The Secretary of State in 1890 announced the intention to assign to the purposes of the Volunteer Force the sum of £100,000 in addition to the usual grants. This sum divided in proportion to numbers between a few of the principal Volunteer centres would go far to meet the difficulty. The requirement, as will be seen later, is not so much for extensive ranges affording practice at long distances, as for accessible sites, where elementary lessons can be mastered without loss of time. A range 200 yards long would amply fulfil these needs, for the men could still visit the more distant ranges in the advanced period of their shooting instruction.

Adequate training in fighting with modern weapons is impracticable without the opportunity of occasional practice over more extensive areas than are at present, as a rule, accessible near our

large towns. It is not parade-grounds that are lacking, but undulating ground, or, indeed, ground of any sort of sufficient extent. The ideal would be a plot of land representing something more than a square mile, over every portion of which a commanding officer should be authorised to move his men. There is no need that the land should be in any way the property of the Volunteers, but commanding officers might be encouraged and assisted to make suitable arrangements with the municipal authorities for occasional access to the parks or other open spaces which exist in most of the large centres of population.

3. *Principles upon which the Method must be based.*

In dealing with Volunteers we have to make the most of a limited time. We have to do with men sincerely anxious to learn, and, as a rule, of open and ready intelligence. At every moment of the work, at every point of the system, the cardinal object—to prepare the men for the realities of war—must be steadily kept in view.

From these considerations flow a number of principles, which may be stated without further argument :—

1. Nothing must be attempted that will not be needed for war.
2. Whatever is done must be done, as far as possible, exactly as it would be done in war.
3. Until a lesson has been perfectly learned the next harder lesson in the same subject must never, under any circumstances, be attempted.

   For example, a company that cannot satisfactorily execute an attack should never be allowed to take part in the practice of the attack by its battalion. A man who is not a steady shot at 100 yards should never be allowed to fire at 400. But a company need not be forbidden to practise the attack because some of its men are unsteady shots.
4. One exercise should illustrate another.

   For example, instruction in the attack

should, as far as possible, go hand-in-hand with practice at the range. A party of four men instructed as a patrol should then be instructed as a non-commissioned officer's post, and this will prepare them to be joined with a similar party to form a fighting group.

5. Appeal to the intelligence of the men.

Two illustrations of this principle may be dwelt upon. Every Volunteer can read, but the whole instruction at present is based on the assumption that he cannot. The *Field Exercise* is so composed that no one will read it unless he is compelled ; but there should be no difficulty in producing a clear and interesting hand-book from which every Volunteer might learn for himself the nature and meaning of all that he has to do. The *Field Exercise* is apparently intended for officers and instructors, but it too often suppresses the reason why, which, in regard to every operation, is the

most valuable knowledge that can be communicated, and the most easily remembered. The edition of 1889 is, in this respect, an improvement on its predecessors.

The principles here enunciated may be illustrated by a review of the elementary training of the Volunteer. He must be taught, if possible, all that he will need in war, and absolutely nothing else.

The recruit on joining should learn the conditions of his service, and the chief rules of discipline;[1] the titles and badges of the various ranks; how to salute and how to address his superiors, and how to deliver a message. All this, except the salute and the outward appearance of the badges, he can learn perfectly well from a book or a card. At present there are several important items in the list which he never learns at all.

Then come a number of practical lessons which

[1] See *supra*, p. 99, note.

no book can convey, things that can be learned only by doing them. First come the lessons which each man must be taught before he is fit to take his place in a group along with others. At this stage the recruit learns how to stand at attention and at ease, to turn, to march, and to halt; how to step out, to step short, to step back, to change step, and to step aside; how to carry his rifle; the order, the trail, the slope, the shoulder,[1] the port, and how to fix and unfix the bayonet. At the same time he receives in the shape of the firing exercise and "position drill" the first preparation for the use of his weapon. He also learns to clean his rifle.

In all this there is no scope for reading, which would be useful only as an assistance and supplement to the instruction in the theory of shooting which every man must needs receive. A clear and simple account of the rifle, and of the course

[1] The "shoulder" might well be substituted for the "present" as the ceremonial movement.

of the bullet, would, however, be a great boon to many a recruit.

Next, the recruit finds his place side by side with others in a squad. The squad learns to dress, to touch, to change front, to make a half turn, and to form,[1] to form fours, to break off files, to pile arms, and to be dismissed. The squad is also taught to extend, to close, to extend to single rank,[2] and to reinforce the skirmishers. At this stage the recruits should also be taught, in groups of four, to act as patrols or as sentry posts.[3] This list exhausts the operations[4] learned by the private. In the company and the battalion he merely repeats the same movements as part of a greater unit. In camp, indeed, he acquires

[1] To the front and rear only; *i.e.* by half a turn to the right or to the left.

[2] It would perhaps be better always to extend the men in a single rank with equal intervals. It is very doubtful whether the formation two deep with intervals is less vulnerable than the single rank; and it is certainly more complicated.

[3] See *ante*, p. 57.

[4] The bayonet exercise is intentionally omitted.

a number of new practices; but he picks them up rather than is taught them; he learns to deal with a tent, to clean tins, and to cook, which are all useful; and to relieve a sentry in a peculiar ceremonial style, which it is certain he ought never to attempt before the enemy.[1]

The recruit goes through all this course in a state of bewilderment. He wonders what it all means, and has a reverence for the turnings and movements proportionate to their mystery. In the course of years the mystery is dissipated; the relation between the half turn and the battalion ultimately manifests itself. But there is no conceivable reason why all this revelation should be postponed. The volunteer should be taught, as soon as possible, the meaning of the various exercises. The patrol, the firing group, the sentry, and the picquet, should exist in his mind in their proper places—in the framework

[1] Sentries should be relieved under all circumstances as they would be in the outpost line. The "pass" is a relic, of which we do not know the history.

of war. Whenever he has this knowledge the soldier's interest in his work is increased; his value as a combatant is multiplied.

Accordingly, one of the requisites of a better system must be held to be a Volunteer's handbook, in which the Volunteer private will find all the information he needs or desires presented clearly, attractively, and in good, plain English. The greatest care should be devoted to its composition, its printing, and its illustration. This book would contain a concise account of the Volunteer's duties on mobilisation, a list of the articles forming his kit, and the mode of packing them, and if in this respect various methods were employed in different brigades, the text supplied to each man should exactly conform with the practice of his own brigade.

The instruction here detailed is imparted to the recruit by a sergeant-instructor of the permanent staff, whose immediate responsibility is to the adjutant. When this course is completed the recruit takes his place in the company. His

further training is the duty of the Volunteer officers (with the exception of the musketry instruction, which is, according to the present regulations, the province of the adjutant),[1] and the system to be adopted will be discussed in the chapter devoted to them. A few important points, however, may here be examined in connection with the principles just laid down.

The principle that nothing should be attempted which will not be needed for war involves a still further simplification of the drill-book, even after its recent revision. Battalion squares, for example, should undoubtedly disappear. The close order movements might, with advantage, be reduced to a minimum, the basis being the double or treble company in quarter column, and its deployment into a line with intervals. The rendezvous formation of the battalion would be obtained by placing its four subdivisions side by side with deploying or smaller intervals, or by

[1] *Volunteer Regulations*, 1895, par. 257. It is an open question whether this rule should be modified.

placing them in mass on a front of one or two double or treble companies. The suppression of all unnecessary ceremonial forms has already been suggested. Not that ceremonial is unnecessary; on the contrary, its punctilious observance is of the greatest value as a discipline; but this discipline can be obtained by the judicious use of forms which have an independent value for purposes of war without complicating the training by the introduction of special movements.

The strict application of our principle would involve the abolition of the march-past in open column, a movement which has disappeared from the field of battle. The purpose of inspection is to ascertain whether the troops have been properly prepared for the battle-field, which involves, of course, the inquiry as to the thoroughness of their discipline. But an attack is an infinitely greater test of discipline than any march-past. In the drill-book of the German Army, the most conservative army in Europe, it is laid down that "whether a troop is perfectly

trained and disciplined is best seen in the combat in dispersed order; for the more the direct influence of the leader is diminished the greater the requirement for the spontaneous action of the individual man."[1]

If the march-past is dropped, an immense economy of time will be effected. It is hardly too much to say that hitherto nearly one third of the whole time available for battalion drill has been given to preparation for the march-past. Now that sizing and equalising have been dispensed with, it should be the rule to place the same men, at all times, in the same group and the same section, and thus to establish that permanent relation between the group-leader and his men, without which it may fairly be asserted that no effective control on the battle-field can ever be insured.

The second principle, that the practice of peace should invariably conform, as far as possible, to the conditions of war, is not less fruitful in its application. It would mean, for example, that

[1] *Exerzir Reglement*, p. 94.

no body of troops should, under any circumstances, move from one point to another without forming an advance guard, a rear guard, and, where circumstances admitted, flank guards. If strictly enforced, it would require that every body of troops when halted, and, in particular, every encampment, should always be protected by outposts, placed as they would be on active service. Above all, it would render imperative, in all practice in extended order, the strict observance of the proper distances between firing line, supports, and reserves. This would, no doubt, be difficult where the extent of ground available is limited, but, in this case, it would probably be found wisest to dispense, as a rule, with the representation of the reserves. The great importance attached in the field exercise to the telling off of a large portion of the battalion as reserve leads, too often, to the men standing idle. This would be valuable in practice upon uneven ground if the officers were required to vary the formations and adapt them to the actual nature of the ground

and to the situation represented. The drill-book requires it, because its authors contemplate a most difficult manœuvre at the close of the attack—the formation of a line for the charge—which, with all the goodwill in the world, we cannot bring ourselves to believe to be possible.

It is, however, from the third principle—that a simple lesson shall be mastered before a harder one is attempted—that most progress is to be expected. We have seen[1] the nature of the requirements in regard to shooting. If they are to be complied with there must be a revolution in the system of instruction. In the first place, a very few shots should be fired in each lesson, at any rate until the soldier has obtained considerable proficiency. The object should be to make the soldier realize the exact conditions of good shooting, and, what is more, to show him that their fulfilment is possible. With this object he should fire first at a small mark and at a short distance, and should use a rest for his rifle. The

[1] Pp. 89, 90.

mark should be precisely defined, and therefore in the instructional stage the bull's-eye should always be used. The new targets introduced a few years ago originated in the excellent idea that target practice should be assimilated to the conditions of the battle-field. But the mistake was made of putting the battle-field before the school. The soldier must first be taught to use his rifle, and afterwards to apply the skill he has acquired. The ideal system would be to begin at 100 yards with a 6-inch bull's-eye, and a series of concentric circles at each succeeding six inches. The soldier should at first always use a rest, and should fire five shots at every practice, no two practices being on the same day. This should be continued until all the five shots can be placed in a 12-inch circle. The next stage would be to attain the same result without the rest. A somewhat similar practice might then be commenced at 150 yards, and the range gradually increased, no man being allowed to fire at any fresh range until he has reached the highest standard laid down for

the range next shorter.[1] The purpose is to give the Volunteer confidence in his power to hit the mark. Accordingly the size and distance of the target should be adjusted to the degree of skill which he has acquired. The task set him should never be so difficult as to shake his confidence.

The principle here applied to shooting covers also a much wider ground. It implies that the company shall not take its place in the double company or the treble company until it is perfect in itself, and until this condition has been tested and ascertained by inspection. Half the irregularities of a battalion attack, as usually practised, are entirely due to the want of thoroughness in company training. This source of weakness must be got rid of at any cost. We know of only one method which can be recommended. In each year the whole of the company drills should be

[1] Since this passage was written the course of musketry instruction for recruits has been modified in the general sense of the suggestions here made.

completed before a single battalion drill is held, and the company training should terminate with an inspection of each company by the commanding officer. The captain who has not fulfilled his responsibilities to his men, or whose men have not responded to his exertions, should be required to make a further effort before the battalion training begins. In the same way, battalions should have completed their training and have been inspected before taking part in brigade movements. It is, after all, merely a question of arranging the seasons. There is no necessity whatever for a uniform scheme of seasons applied to all battalions; each commanding officer must be left to arrange them according to the particular circumstances of his corps.

The doctrine thus emphasised—that the second lesson must not begin until the first has been mastered—has a most important bearing upon discipline. Discipline should not be misunderstood; it means far more than mere obedience, it involves the schooling of the whole man, the

formation, or even transformation, of his character. Nothing strengthens a man's character more than the habit of doing well whatever he does.

The rules or principles which have here been too imperfectly developed may be studied in their concrete application upon any drill-ground on the Continent. They may be read at every page in the regulations of those armies which are earnestly preparing for war. At the beginning of the German drill-book we read: "In war everything complicated is impracticable; it is a question of learning and of applying a few simple forms, which, however, must be practised with precision and mastered with absolute certainty";[1] and again: "The most important requirements of war are—strictest discipline and order, and, at the same time, the utmost exertion of all the faculties."

[1] "Im Kriege verspricht nur Einfaches Erfolg. Es handelt sich daher nur um die Erlernung und Anwendung weniger einfacher Formen, welche aber mit Straffheit eingeübt und mit voller Sicherheit beherrscht werden müssen."—*German Infantry Drill-Book*, 1889, p. 1.

4. *Discipline, or the Officers.*

The value of an army, or of any body of troops, depends almost entirely upon the character of its officers. A hundred illustrations could be given of this palpable yet often neglected truth. The experience of half a dozen campaigns in our own day has shown even the most unwarlike races obtaining splendid military successes under first-rate European training and leadership. Seven years ago the much-despised Egyptian fellaheen proved themselves admirable soldiers at Argin and Toski[1] when led by the English officers who had trained them. So great is the importance of the officer in the highest rank that a victory is always attributed to the commander, and posterity forgets the very names of his subordinates. The Duke of Wellington used to say that he considered Napoleon's presence in the field to be equal to 40,000 men in the balance.[2]

[1] *Blackwood's Magazine*, June 1890.

[2] Stanhope's *Conversations with the Duke of Wellington*, p. 81.

A hundred utterances might be quoted from the same lips to show the vast importance which all commanders attach to the character and qualities of the officers of every grade. "The officer," we read in the German order of field service, "is in every department the teacher and the leader of his men. He must, therefore, be their superior in strength of character as well as in knowledge and experience."

The perfect organisation would be that which succeeded at every point in putting the right man in the right place. The first place which it is most important to fill rightly is the highest. In a battalion, though it would be too much to say that the commanding officer is everything, it is the simple truth that everything depends upon him. His capacity is the limit beyond which progress is impossible. If he is incompetent the battalion is blighted, and there is no cure short of his removal. If he is a thorough soldier the battalion will be as well trained as is permitted by the time available and the energy

and ability of the other officers. In the same way, the efficiency of a company is a question of the efficiency of its captain.

There can be no doubt then that to make the most of the Volunteer force means first of all to raise to the highest attainable level the professional value of its officers. The officer in war has at once to lead and to control those below him. This purpose, however, is defined not by his own caprice but by the instructions of his immediate superior. To execute the intention explained by his superior the officer stakes his very existence. "Without fear of responsibility every officer in every situation, even the most extraordinary, must risk his whole being to fulfil his mission, even without waiting for orders."[1] Thus the officers are the moral backbone of the service. They are the moving spirits, the controlling power, the intelligent guides of the force to which they belong.

The first requisite then is that the officer's

[1] German *Order of Field Service*, p. 10.

subordinates should look up to him and find in him a motive power, a stay, and a firm support. His inner strength must be a perennial source of confidence both for him and for them. It is this mutual confidence, the consciousness of each one that his fellows, like himself, know their duty and will do it, the trust of the men that they will be rightly led, and of the leaders that they will be faithfully followed, that constitutes discipline.[1]

This confidence depends on the intrinsic value

[1] Compare the following passage from Stanhope's *Conversations with the Duke of Wellington*:—

"I remember in the retreat from Burgos desiring one general officer (the Duke did not name him) to charge a French corps and drive it back over the river. The officer made all kinds of difficulties and objections, saying it could not be done. I answered, 'If you can't do it I must try!' So I had to go myself. Sir Edward Paget, I recollect, was quite surprised, and asked, 'Is this all you mean to do with him?' thinking that the officer ought to be punished. But I said, 'It is only that he does not yet know the troops so well as I do. Depend upon it, it requires time for a general to inspire confidence—or to feel it; for you never will have confidence in yourself until you see others have confidence in you.'"

of the officers, so that in reality the discipline of an army corresponds exactly with what the officers are in themselves. "The officers" and "discipline" are two names for the same thing.[1]

It is the strong will that makes the leader. The best example of such a man is Columbus, holding to his purpose when all his comrades were in despair; or Stanley, never at a loss, even in the last extremity in his African hardships. Without the personal qualities which give him the natural ascendency over his subordinates, no man can make a really good officer.

Second only in importance to strength of character is clearness of judgment. Force of spirit is an incommunicable quality, but judgment and knowledge are often the result of training. A certain native intelligence is indispensable, but it may be enlarged by culture, and if the know-

[1] This confirms the views upon military law expressed on pp. 98, 99.

ledge acquired be only thorough enough it adds weight even to character.

The fit man having been secured, the next thing is to train him. It is the inner man that must be formed. The drill and the knowledge of battle, march, and camp are but the outward forms and means; the essentials are to steel the character, to quicken the insight, and to mature the judgment.

The best way to strengthen character is to load a man with responsibility—to force him to decide for himself. The weightier the business with which he is charged the better. Accordingly, the first principle in forming officers is to intrust them freely with authority. The desired effect upon character will, however, not be produced unless the exercise of authority allowed and required brings with it its natural consequences. The officer must be answerable for his decisions. The exercise of his initiative must be unhindered and unhampered by any interference on the part of his superiors. The

results, however, must be tested and examined by his superiors, and by the results their author must stand or fall. If he has proved his worth it should be recognised; if he has been negligent, or shown himself incompetent, he must be prepared for the withdrawal of the trust which has been misplaced in him. In short, the continuance of the officer in his post, or his advancement to a higher one, must be the consequence of good work. Bad work or neglect should bring in question his fitness for his position.

The adoption of these principles requires that there should be no doubt what each particular officer's work is. It consists in the instruction of the body of men placed under his command. The captain, as commander of a company, should be in peace the trainer, as he will be in war the leader of that body. He will therefore have full authority in the choice of his methods of instruction. When the period of company training is over, his next superior, who may mean-

while have watched the process, will test the results by an inspection. The quality of these results is the captain's testimonial.

To recapitulate, each officer's sphere of action must be defined. He must have full initiative within those limits, and must answer for the results. In these three rules, or rather in this one rule—for its three parts are inseparable—is contained the whole training of the officer. The system flows from the necessity of forming the character, but at the same time it fulfils the other needs of enlarging the knowledge and forming the judgment. Without knowledge an officer cannot instruct his men. But the moment he becomes responsible for their instruction he will set to work of himself to acquire the necessary knowledge; while in the process of imparting it, and in the practical application of what he has learned, the kind of judgment required will grow up insensibly.

The system of promotion is implied in the system of training. Promotion should never be

regarded as a reward—that is, should never be given in any man's interest or to cause him satisfaction. It should be conferred only in the interest of the army—that is, in order to place him who receives it in a position to render more valuable services by reason of the more extended authority he will receive. Accordingly, it will be based upon the proof of capacity afforded by the work done, but it will not be competitive. When a vacancy occurs the senior officer of the rank below will be appointed, provided he has proved himself fit. But if his work has not been such as to justify his advancement, he must be passed over and the next man taken. This should be the invariable rule, but it should be a rule only, and not a matter of right, for no man has a right to promotion, or rather the State has the right to choose for its service those who can most safely be intrusted with responsibility. There are, indeed, a limited number of officers whose quite exceptional character and ability make it desirable to invest them with proportionate authority,

and for such men exceptional avenues of promotion should be kept open in the interests of the service.

Not less important than promotion is the selection of officers in the first instance. The type of character required is happily not uncommon either among Englishmen or Scotsmen, and officers, especially those of some experience, are usually competent judges of it. In some corps the practice is adopted of submitting the name of every candidate for a commission to the officers of the battalion, any of whom can exercise a veto. The officers of the battalion thus form a sort of club to which entrance can be gained only by election. There is much to recommend this system, the weakest argument being that it is the rule in the German army, and that high authorities in France have desired to adopt it.[1] One of the great objects to be steadily kept in view is to raise and to recognise in every possible way the position

[1] "L'Officier et les Cadres Supérieures." — *Journal des Sciences Militaires*, vol. xxi. p. 387.

of the Volunteer officer. There is no more practical recognition than that which is implied in giving the officer a voice in the selection of his comrades. At the same time hardly any other plan offers better guarantees that the new-comers will be fitted for their posts. The experience of those Volunteer corps of which the rank and file are workmen shows that the men expect their officers to be of a different class in life from their own. A "ranker" could hardly by any possibility obtain their respect, however well he might deserve it. There is, therefore, no harm in any degree of exclusiveness which the officers of a corps care to establish. One guarantee, indeed, should be taken outside the corps. Every candidate for a commission should be required to give proofs of a fair education.[1]

No means should be left untried to increase the respect for the Volunteer officer both within and

[1] A certificate that he has at any time passed any university examination, local or other, would perhaps be as much as need be for the present required.

without the service. The first step, as we have seen, is to intrust him with authority, and to establish an inseparable connection between his work and his prospects of promotion. In the next place *esprit de corps* should be furthered in every possible way, not least by consulting the officers themselves in the selection of their comrades. The authorities responsible for the Volunteer force should avoid any depreciation of the Volunteer officer, and neither hint nor suggest a mistrust in his capacity. For this reason, because it tends to lower the self-respect of the Volunteer officer, we deprecate the suggestion that the body of Volunteer officers should be strengthened or leavened by a larger admixture of officers taken from the line. To employ a large number of regular officers is impracticable for financial reasons. The professional element in the Volunteer forces is already, as will be seen in the next chapter, disproportionately costly. To employ officers who have served in the line long enough to retire at the public expense implies a slight

upon the Volunteer officer, for it suggests the idea that any sort of officer is good enough for the Volunteer force. Again, nothing is more demoralising than the suspicion, entertained in some quarters by Volunteer officers, that the authorities contemplate some day making use of the Volunteers while replacing their officers by substitutes from the line. These views, it is to be hoped, will not be misunderstood. It would be a contradiction to suppose that while advocating everything that would make much of the Volunteer officers, we should be animated by anything but the highest regard and respect for the officers of the army. And wherever an officer who has served his time in the army is willing to become a Volunteer officer upon the same terms as his Volunteer comrades, he is sure of the warmest welcome.

If the Volunteer officer is a leader and an instructor he is always in want of leading and instruction for himself. The present arrangements for this purpose can hardly be considered satisfactory. The appointment of brigadiers was

made under conditions which take away almost all the benefits which might have been derived from the measure. In the first place, the brigadier's functions are temporary and limited. The battalions of his brigade are subject to a dual control, of which the larger half still remains with the officer commanding the regimental district. Officers commanding battalions are thus loaded with a double labour of correspondence. They have to please two masters whose objects, and therefore whose requirements, are different. This dual arrangement sins against the first law of good organisation: that there should be unity of command. The brigadier should be to his brigade what the commanding officer is to the battalion; his authority should be paramount, his supervision constant. In character, judgment, and knowledge he should be undoubtedly superior to all those below him. It will hardly be asserted that this has usually been the case. The officer who has closed his professional career in the army, and is past the prime of life, is seldom on

a level with the military requirements of the time. It is not uncommon for a brigadier, even though his interest in his brigade is sincere, his experience ripe, and his character such as to command universal respect, to feel and even to say that, in consequence of the recent advance in the methods of war, he feels unable to express a decided judgment with regard to the operations which he is called upon to superintend. It is evident that this is not as it should be. The first function of the brigadier is to be an instructor, in particular an instructor to the officers commanding battalions.

The position of the adjutant is not less difficult than that of the brigadier. His functions are defined as those of an instructor to the battalion, but he is responsible only for the musketry instruction, for the training of recruits, for the discipline of the permanent staff, and for a series of reports to the War Office. To make the adjutant responsible for the musketry instruction is to take out of the hands of the company officers

an important function with which it is on every ground desirable that they should themselves be intrusted; most of all, on the ground that their ascendency over the men is weakened by the assumption of their incompetence in any respect.[1] The adjutant cannot be made responsible for the training of the battalion, for that would be to make him the commanding officer. To require the adjutant to send reports in addition to those drawn up by the commanding officer implies a want of confidence in the latter, which is not, or at any rate ought not, to be justified. The theory of this arrangement no doubt is that the adjutant is a Government agent for the purpose of controlling the expenditure of Government money. But the commanding officer is not less a Government agent, and it is monstrous to suppose that of two men the inferior, who is

[1] On this point nothing better has been written than the passage at pp. 35 ff. of the *French Cavalry Drill-Book* of 1890, containing the views of the commission which reported in 1876.

paid, is more trustworthy than the superior, who works of his own free will. The instruction of the recruits is carried out by the sergeants of the permanent staff under the supervision of the adjutant. In his position as instructor of the officers the adjutant labours under the disadvantage that he is not their direct superior. But no principle is more clearly recognised in every modern army than that the instructor should in every case be the direct superior of those instructed. It is hardly too much to say that the most characteristic change which the Austrians, the Italians, and the French have introduced into their system during the last twenty years has been the adoption of the principle that the functions of instruction and command are identical and inseparable. For these reasons we should propose a serious modification in the present Volunteer system. The work now performed by the adjutant should be divided and distributed. The instruction of the recruits—that is, the supervision exercised over the staff-sergeants, who are

in these cases the actual instructors, should be given to the sergeant-major, who should always be selected with the greatest care. The musketry instruction should, if possible, be intrusted to the captains of companies, even if it involved the assignment of a staff-sergeant to every company in addition to the present permanent staff. The instruction of the officers should be given to the brigadier—that is to say, the brigadier should be the direct instructor of the officers commanding battalions, and his teaching should be at all times accessible to the field officers and the captains. Young officers, on joining, should be drilled in the first instance by the sergeant-major, and afterwards instructed by their own captains, being tested from time to time, and their instruction supplemented, if need be, by the brigadier himself. The reports now drawn up by the adjutant should be prepared under the responsibility of the commanding officer.

It will be evident that the functions here assigned to the brigadier involve that his post shall

be filled by an officer who has no other duties; in other words, the brigadier must be a professional soldier, and must be paid for his work. This entails no addition to the present expense, for the battalion adjutants become unnecessary if their work is distributed among others, and the pay of the brigadier, on the full army scale of his rank, will be less than the pay of the adjutants of the brigade taken together. The appointment of a professional brigadier renders unnecessary the control at present exercised by the officer commanding the regimental district.

It only remains to add in this connection that the post of brigadier, as thus defined, should be filled by the most careful selection—that is, it should be reserved for field officers of exceptional merit. It would be consistent with the purpose we have kept steadily in view, of strengthening in every way the position of the Volunteer officer, if the post of brigadier were occasionally offered to a Volunteer commanding officer who should have given proofs of unusual character and ability.

In such cases it should carry with it the same pay and the same rank as in the case of officers appointed from the line. It is unnecessary to enter into any minute details of the system of training for companies, battalions, and brigades. A large scope will be left for the discretion of the officers responsible at each stage. The method will be that which has already been suggested of a division of the year into periods corresponding to the several units. At the opening of the year recruits will be posted to companies, and the period of company training will begin. After the inspection of the companies would come a brief period for the exercise of the double or treble companies before proposed. These, when inspected, would take their place in the battalion for a further period, and the year would close with the exercise of the whole brigade under the immediate command of the brigadier. The brigadier, it is needless to remark, would throughout the year watch all that was done, acting continuously as the superintendent, the

adviser, and the instructor of his subordinates.

5. *Finance.*

The financial difficulties which have so long beset the Volunteer force cannot much longer be a source of embarrassment. The resolution proposed in March 1890 by Sir Edward Hamley, and adopted by the House of Commons, affirms the expediency of making good from the public revenues all deficiencies in the necessary equipment of Volunteers, and all the debts of corps properly incurred for necessary purposes. The most important debts are those which have arisen from the obligation to provide suitable headquarters. Nearly every battalion is encumbered with such a debt, the management of which is the principal source of pecuniary trouble. When they have been cleared away the financial management of the corps will be a mere question of ordinary book-keeping and supervision. If any additional expenditure beyond the grants at present established should be necessary, it will be

for the purchase of ranges, and for the acquisition of land for manœuvres. The recent grant for equipment should fully suffice, in addition to the various capitation and other grants, for all ordinary purposes. It is indeed difficult to believe that the money granted to Volunteers has in all cases been managed with strict economy. This opinion is based upon the experience of the battalion which has frequently been referred to in the course of this essay. The battalion has for some time been completely equipped. It has for many years held a well-recognised position in the force; but it has never received aid from outside subscriptions, and has never been without a balance in the bank. Until a few years ago, when its present commanding officer decided to rebuild the headquarters, the battalion had never been in debt, and the only debt now existing is for the borrowed capital still due in respect of this expenditure. This debt, though it amounts to several thousand pounds, is far more than covered by the present value of the head-

quarters and other property of the corps; and even without the recent extra grant for equipment, the repayment of the debt in a reasonable number of years was practically insured, so long, that is, as the battalion should continue to maintain its present efficiency. The author, therefore, has no financial proposals to make. It may be worth while, however, to give a concise statement of the annual cost of the Volunteer force, so far as it can be ascertained from the army estimates. The capitation grants, camp allowances, and miscellaneous charges (deducting from the latter items incurred for the permanent staff) amount in the estimates for 1890–91 to £589,300; the charge for transport and stores is £143,000, making a total for the Volunteers proper of £732,000. The charges for the permanent staff are more difficult to ascertain, owing to a recent change in the form of the estimates. But by taking one or two items not set out in the estimate for this year (1890), upon the basis of the figures of the preceding year, we obtain the following data:—

Adjutants	£73,000	0	0
Sergeant Instructors . . .	90,000	0	0
Miscellaneous charges for Adjutants, Brigade-Majors, and Medical Attendance	8,000	0	0
Retiring allowance to Adjutants .	18,000	0	0
Commutation of retiring allowances to Adjutants	4,553	0	0
Deferred pay, etc.	76,000	0	0
Total . . .	£269,553	0	0

It will appear, therefore, that the cost in the present year, without the additions involved by the equipment grant, amounts to a total of £1,001,853. Upon these figures two comments may be made. In the first place, the cost of the Volunteer force has already increased beyond the million which ought to be sufficient for the annual current expenditure. It would, perhaps, be desirable that the existing debts should be wiped out as early as possible, and that an attempt should then be made to keep the current expenditure within the limit just named. Secondly, the comparative expensiveness of the Volunteer and of the paid services is shown by comparing

the figures of expenditure just given with the numbers of the permanent staff, and of the Volunteers themselves. The current estimates (1890–1), provide for 220,930 efficient Volunteers, for 1,578 staff-sergeants, and 291 adjutants.

CONCLUSION

We have now completed, in its broad outlines, the inquiry proposed in the introduction. It has been necessary to confine ourselves to the establishment of principles and to the indication of the spirit which should preside over the organisation and training of the Volunteers. An exhaustive exposition of details, while it would require a voluminous treatise, would probably fail of its purpose. For the essential point is not the regulation of details by a rigid code, but the choice for the posts of authority of men whose judgment will enable them to guide the work towards its goal—readiness for war—while bearing in mind the peculiar limitations to which Volunteer service is subject.

It will, no doubt, be remarked that the author sets up an ideal, perhaps an unattainable, standard. But this is the only practical plan of improvement. If the ideal cannot be reached, at least it will serve as a guide. For example, it may be found impossible for every Volunteer to place five bullets in a 12-inch circle at 100 yards. In that case the circle must be enlarged. But the principle that real progress must be made at 100 yards before practice at 200 yards is attempted must remain sacred.

The improvement of the Volunteer force depends not upon a vast expenditure of public money, nor upon the attempt to assimilate the Volunteer service to that of the regular troops, but upon the training and encouragement of the Volunteer officer. In this department only the broad lines of a method have been traced. For, since the introduction of tactical studies, the officers have made really remarkable progress. No addition to the examinations—above all, no regulation making them compulsory, is desirable.

An examination does not test an officer's worth. It is useful as giving a goal and a stimulus to his studies, and helps him to read with care whatever he reads. But study is not the end, it is only a means. The end is to make a good leader of troops, and for this the officer's character and his bearing in presence of the men are more than his book-learning. The officer should indeed be encouraged to study. Tactical theory, the war-game, and, above all, military history, are the invaluable and indispensable aids to the officer's intellectual training. But here again it is insight and judgment, not facts stored in the memory, that are required.

The Volunteer force represents the spontaneous effort of the people of Great Britain to fulfil that obligation of national defence which on the Continent of Europe is met by the system of compulsory military service. The British method is peculiarly suited to the national character, for it is founded in self-help. It is in this spirit that the future organisation of the Volunteer

force should be considered. The assistance of the State should be given in the shape of a sufficient, but not an extravagant, money grant, and of liberal encouragement from the military authorities. Above all, the value of the efforts of Volunteer officers should be freely recognised. Upon them the efficiency of the force entirely depends. Their exertions hitherto have been crowned with a degree of success which has astonished most those who best understand the difficulties of military organisation.

This essay will not have been written in vain if it helps to raise the estimation in which Volunteer officers are held by their fellow-citizens, and to encourage some among their number by placing in a clear light the nobility of their mission as the soul of an army of citizens:—

"Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus
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